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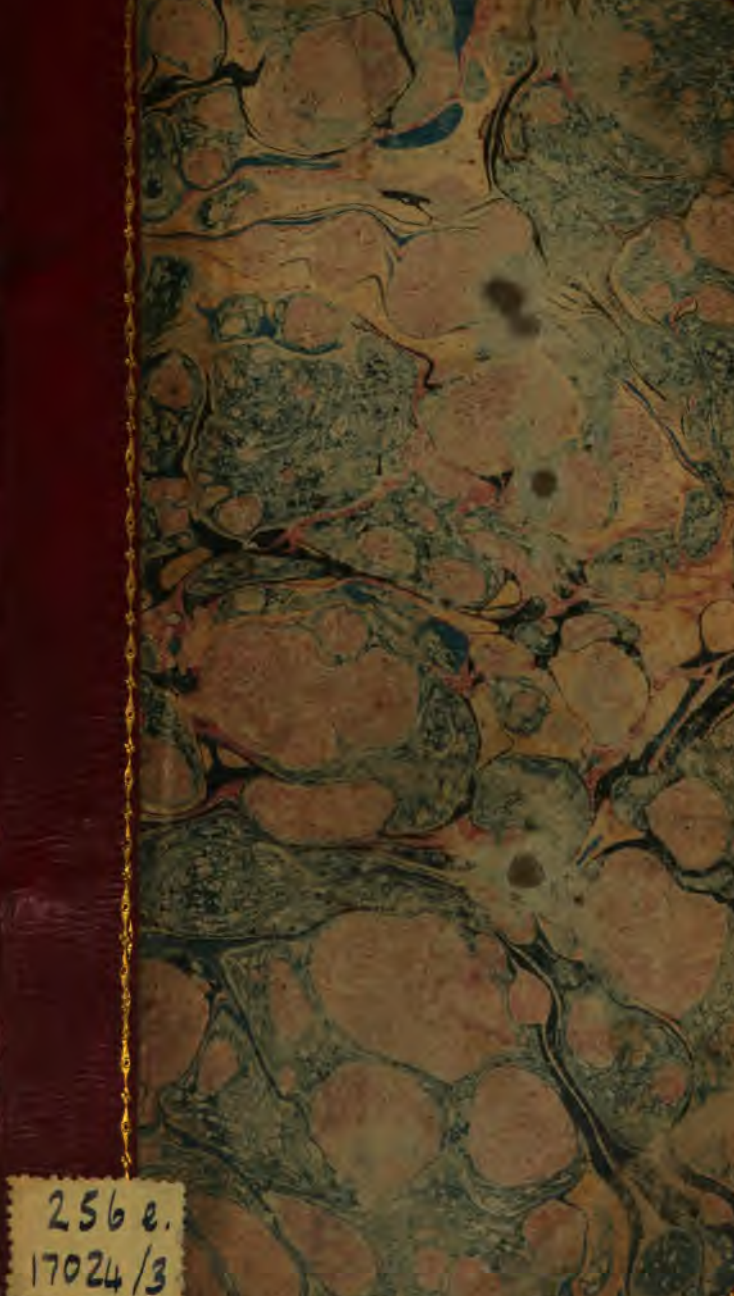
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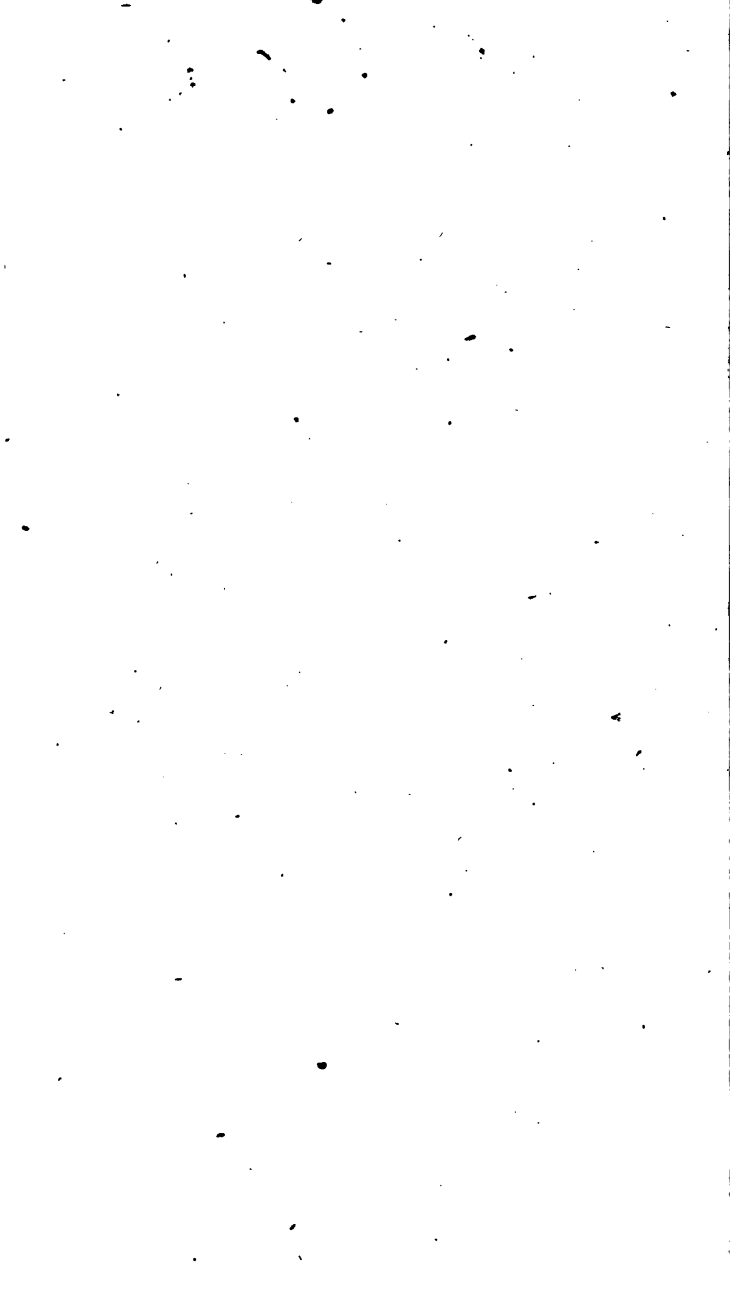


F. E. Perowne.

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I'LL CONSIDER OF IT!

A TALE,

IN THREE VOLUMES,

IN WHICH

"THINKS I TO MYSELF"

IS PARTIALLY CONSIDERED.

"Consider it not too deeply."

SHAKESPEARE.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THOMAS TEGG,

NO. 111, CHEAPSIDE.

1812.

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF DALLAS



I'LL CONSIDER OF IT!

CHAP. I.

A generous Forgery.

I REALLY fear my readers will begin to think that I have quite forgot the gay and enthusiastic Henry Denbigh, who appears quite thrown by, without being made any farther use of ; like poor Mrs. Fidget, in "*Thinks I to myself*," who, after being seemingly done with, is

brought forward in the last page, to let us know that she died of "*a cancer in her tongue!*" Cruel, cruel punishment! and far beyond any offence that poor Mrs. Fidget, with that unruly member, could possibly have committed, however much she might be given to a little country scandal and village gossiping. Better, far better, my good predecessor, would it have been to have dropt her down, as inanimate as the *hand of the child* you saw *declaiming*, than have given her, even in fancy, a malady the most dreadful of all in the whole catalogue of human miseries.

It is often requisite, I know very well, as an author of fictitious works, to kill or banish a character which we want to get rid of, and cannot very well know how to provide for; but as I cannot afford to part yet with Henry Denbigh, so I do not chuse to either kill him, or keep him always at Madeira.

He

He however remained there much longer than he intended, when he first set sail from England; and he waited for the arrival of a sincere friend, a young man he had known from childhood, and who was expected every month to join his family, already stationed in Madeira.

Henry was himself, also, so busily employed at his pen every day, nay every hour, which he could spare from company, and those acquaintance he had formed through the introduction of his father's friend, that the time elapsed much quicker than could be imagined, and he was astonished to reflect that he was now commencing another winter since his first departure from England.

People are not gifted all alike with talents. Henry was by no means expert at counterfeiting the hand-writing of any one; but he now studied the art, and laboured diligently every day at it, till he became a perfect adept in the imitation

of one, the only one he wished to copy, which was the hand-writing of his deceased father.

The reason of old Mr. Denbigh wishing his son so ardently to obtain this box of papers, which only contained a few letters, and had been left with his friend, as he once touched at Madeira, was from his knowing so well the extreme liberality and generous feeling of that son's disposition and heart; and there were in this box some very affecting letters from a female relation. They represented, in most sensible and lively touches, the narrowness of her income, and intreated only Mr. Denbigh's interest for her husband; but that she and her family had pecuniary difficulties also to struggle with was evident, though expressed with the utmost delicacy, and in refined language. Her mother, she said, his own aunt, had charged her, on her death-bed, should she ever feel distress, to apply to Mr. Denbigh, her nephew,
who

who was already in possession of immense wealth, to which he was daily adding; and he, she was well assured, would cheerfully assist her.

The letter, which bore the latest date, represented her and her family in a state of pecuniary embarrassment, almost bordering on indigence; and yet, owing to the situation of life in which they moved, could not be ameliorated by the toils of labour, or the ploddings of trade, and wherein the dress and appearance of gentlefolks must unavoidably be kept up, without the means to support it. A situation in life the most distressing, little thought of by indifferent beholders, sometimes even envied, scarce ever pitied, though the most pitiable of any.

The relations of Mr. Denbigh, who composed this family, were totally excluded from any bequest whatever, in his will. In fact, they were not mentioned at all; he had only two other

relations by marriage who were as rich as himself; to them, therefore, he only left rings, and Henry, his only child, was his sole and undisputed heir.

Henry, by dint of the most scrupulous enquiry, soon found out that the fair writer of the above mentioned letters, had long ceased to trouble or be troubled; yet that her husband still lived in obscurity, and he feared, in poverty. He therefore resolved to forge a codicil to his father's will.

His friend, on whom he could safely depend, was in the law; he knew he could easily persuade him to be one of the witnesses, and he trusted to Providence for the other; but whom to obtain, and when obtained, to deceive, he feared would be attended with some difficulty.

Denbigh would not have resorted to this method, had he not found it the most delicate to the feelings of an honourable and gallant man, possessed of a refined
and

and dignified mind, and who, perhaps, with noble scorn and wounded pride, would have rejected all pecuniary gifts from the son of him who chose entirely to banish him from his notice or remembrance.

Soon after the arrival of Henry's friend at Madeira, this important confidence was given; and the most sacred, solemn, and binding oaths were exchanged, and credited with that heartfelt satisfaction, which true and genuine friendship alone knows how to feel in its sacred communion.

“However, my dear friend,” said Mr. Meredith one day to Henry, “of course you mean to date this codicil from hence!”

“That will not be so well,” said Henry; “because all my acquaintance in London, knowing I am here——”

“Yes, but you came for papers here

of your father's. Whence was the will of your father dated?"

"From Calcutta."

"Let the codicil then, be dated here; your father once touched at this island to see an old friend, who was in possession of your papers; no one will be able to tell at what period that happened, therefore date the codicil about two or three months previous to your father's death. I shall be one of the witnesses; and you know that my father was in India, that he knew *your* father well, and that his name is William Meredith, as well as my own. But this is not all; you must gain also over to your interest, to witness this, a very rigid man in law matters; and a person high in eminence in this island. How you will be able to impose on his lynx-eyed punctuality I know not.

"Has he not," said Henry, "some favourite hobby-horse, on which we may

be able to set him a going? while I, in the midst of papers will make him sign two instead of one! Surely, this might be done?"

"But what other paper will you have to read over to him?" said Mr. Meredith.

"Oh! leave that to me," said Henry. "Money, my dear fellow, is only to me like trash, if it cannot afford me the means of doing some good with it. What are those heaps of vile metal in themselves, which my poor father was so fond of accumulating? Were I to give away three parts of my present income, I should have enough, and plenty to spare from that; therefore I mean to purchase a little spot in this island, which I find is to be disposed of, and which I shall immediately beg you to accept of, for your trouble and kind assistance. An agreement must of course be made between the buyer and the seller, written and properly

perly witnessed ; and I shall affect to be very particular ; and if that will not do, I will make my own will, and have a codicil to that, and my father's name was Henry as well as mine, and then surely your rigid disciplinarian of the law will come and witness that for me ! But tell me now, is not there some conversation whereby I can interest him, so as to bewilder him a little ?”

“ Speak to him about the breed of horses in England,” said Meredith. “ Go through a list of all the most famous racers within the last eight years at Newmarket ; and I do believe he will soon be so deeply interested, that you might give him his own death warrant to sign instead of the paper you had just been reading to him. But mark me, my dear friend, do not think by what I have just said, that he would ever heedlessly do any thing derogatory to justice or equity of principle ; and vice or chicanery, be assured

assured can never have it in their power, from his great prudence, to impose upon him. He is loved for his severity, as much as he is for his goodness, because all his actions proceed from integrity of heart; and as he is strict in punishing the wicked, so he is most beneficent in rewarding every virtuous action, and in the encouragement of every good propensity."

"But," said the lively Henry, "should the wicked begin to prate of a race-horse he would, perhaps, hang the innocent and save the guilty, as easily as he would be deceived by me, who am now about committing a forgery."

"Ay," said Meredith, "but he would not suffer a suspicious character to speak on those subjects; but he knows you as a man of fortune and honour; he knows me well, and has known me long; and he would never, I am sure, have the least idea, that either you or I would impose upon him.

Henry remained now for some time silently ruminating.

“ Good heavens !” said he at length, “ the most famous horses at Newmarket ! what a task have you set me ; you might as well have asked me to give the good gentleman a list of all the black legs who attend there. I was never at Newmarket in my life, nor ever mean it, so far as relates to the races. I have too much regard for the whole *brute* creation, as they are called, to run them till they are half dead, and pamper them for that purpose, at an expence better employed merely to gratify my own folly.”

Well,” said Meredith, “ that’s nothing at all ; when you was in England, you rode one of the finest horses I ever saw ; you have done the same here, and I was with you one morning at Tattersal’s, where you was arguing on the merits of an horse you bought of him, and in those technical terms, which shewed you was
not

not unskilled in horsemanship, no more than in the different marks and qualifications of the noble creature you afterwards struck a bargain for."

"Yes," said Henry, "I was always fond of riding a good horse; I left that one you mention under the care of a man, who I know will treat him well. Ah! Meredith, I often think when I bestride the generous steed, that I put the curb and spur to one who, perhaps, ought to curb and spur me."

"What you still believe in the metempsychosis of the Bramins?" said Meredith.

"I do not think," said Henry, "any thing can *convert* me, as you, perhaps, may be pleased to call it, from so rational a doctrine."

"I should not seek to change your sentiments on that head," said Meredith, "because I am sure it is a belief that can do no harm, and my father, who, you know, has

has not long been from India, is very much given to it. He told me some extraordinary stories of a young Bramin, named Nahred."

"Nahred!" interrupted Denbigh, "I knew him well. Poor fellow! he was torn in pieces by a tyger."

"Yes," said Meredith; "he spoke the English language fluently for one of his cast. A gay young Englishman used to say, he was certain his father was an Englishman; and he had a servant so very much like him, that he used to delight in dressing him up like the Bramin. And my father says, you could hardly, under this disguise, tell him from Nahred."

"Poor, virtuous Nahred!—Well, my dear friend, though," resumed Henry, "we must hasten to the conclusion of my business. Beauty, yielding beauty, waits for me in dear England, to bind me at once in the rosy fetters of love and marriage!"

riage! Heigho!—Well, no more of that! Now, is not *this* too much like a Newmarket man, from a wife to a horse, and a horse to a wife? But I own, in all what you have said of my remarks to Tattersall, I do confess myself a connoisseur; but I am at the same time, totally ignorant, I positively declare to you, of one single name of our most high mettled racers ”

“ Oh! if that’s all,” said Meredith, “ I can lend you two or three racing calendars, and I can give you also a printed account of the last Spring meeting. Dash along, then, through thick and thin. Talk like many others, about you know not what, and as you and I are already in the good gentleman’s books, depend upon it, the day is our own.”

“ I would cry bravo, bravissimo,” said Henry, “ if I had not again to go through a course of study. I assure you,

I thought I should never be able to imitate my father's cramp hand-writing ; and yet, look how cleverly I have got through the business. But, oh ! this horse-racing business, will be worse than all."

CHAP. II.

The wisest should beware of Hobby-horses.

BEHOLD now Henry Denbigh studying with unwearied diligence to make himself master of all the scientific, as well as slang terms used on the turf; through which toilsome task, we have no ambition to follow him, but will set him down in his best apartment, where we shall find him buried up to his eyes almost in papers of no value to any one but the owner; nor can it indeed be said they were of much use to him, being the
greater

greater part of them destined to the honourable funereal fate of the ancients, consumed by fire to ashes.

The purchase of the little estate was made, and Henry affecting to be much indisposed, so as not to be able to quit his home, the great man, whose signature he required to make all complete, did him the honour of waiting on him for that purpose.

The copyhold, if we may so term it, was read to him, and the gentleman put on his spectacles, and read it himself. As he took the pen in his hand to sign it, Henry said aloud to his friend, "How happy am I that I have got this business arranged; now, if I have any thing like a tolerable passage, I may have some hopes of being lucky enough to be present at the next Spring meeting at Newmarket."

"Ah," said the gentleman, laying down his pen, and forgetting he had already

already signed ; “ pray, sir, which are now the most famous horses on the turf ? ”

Henry went through all the names of the most famous which his friend had marked for him in the racing calendar, and descanted on their merits and demerits with all the knowing slang of an old hand.

The good gentleman smiled and looked delighted. They perceived he had already mounted his Bucephalus, and now could be set a-going at what pace they pleased.

“ As you attend, Mr. Denbigh, at Newmarket,” said he, “ you are no doubt fond of being present at Ascott, Epsom, and many other of our provincial races. There are some excellent horses to be found at such places ; and which I would not exchange for the famous Eclipse himself. I should like to hear
some

some of their names," added he, "if you please."

Henry was somewhat puzzled by this last attack; he had heard, however, the names of some by accident, and a look from Meredith encouraged him to dash boldly forward.

"Why, yes, sir," said he, with an air of knowing consequence, "there's the famous Trumpator, belonging to Lord * * * * *."

"God bless me!" said the gentleman, "I knew Trumpator's father, when he was a little colt no higher than my knee."

"Then, sir," said Henry, not giving him time to go through the genealogy of Trumpator, "there's Vixen, as fine a mare belonging to Mr. * * * *, as ever came on the course."

"Ay," said the good gentleman, "and I say the mare's are always the fleetest. I can always depend when I bet

bet upon a good mare of not being a loser; they have always more spirit than a horse."

"Do you think so, sir?" said Meredith, who himself was rather fond of the sport.

"Undoubtedly; ask the German officers, who always prefer them, for their cavalry. And so, Vixen, you say," added he, "is a fine creature? I wonder what he did with Highflyer!"

"O Sir," said Henry, "Highflyer is still a noted winner."

"What has he won?—Did he ever win the King's plate?"

"More than once, sir." But poor Henry had really forgot whether he had ever won it at all.

"I can tell you a good thing," said Henry, fearful of the conversation taking a turn; "a devilish good story about Highflyer and a horse belonging to the late
late

late Duke of Q———. I will tell you another time, it is too long at present."

"But, pray, sir, did you know," continued he, "when you was in England, a most excellent racer named Monk Lewis?" "No, but I have seen his name sometimes in the advertisements, when we get the English newspapers."

"O sir," said Henry, "he is, in my opinion, a wonderful creature! His powers are beyond compare; but lately we have not seen much of him. He is, though wild and energetic, just at this time rather lazy. At no time will he bear the curb; give him the rein and he appears to mount into the clouds."

Now there really is a race horse of the above name, but whether Henry was then praising what he knew nothing about, or giving scope to a fond enthusiasm he always felt for one of the first writers of romance England could ever boast, we
know

know not, but the praise might equally apply to both.

“Wonderful, most wonderful!” said the good gentleman. “How I prize a creature of such energy, above the common track.”

Henry again began, encouraged by the profound attention bestowed upon him by his open-mouthed listener, who seemed fearful of losing one word of what he uttered. Then the gentleman began an elaborate account of what he himself had witnessed in England, when he constantly attended the Newmarket meetings, and poor Henry was often in danger of being thrown out, by one who was now mounted on his hobby, and galloping at a most rapid pace, when the servant of Mr. Denbigh came in, and said, that a person wished to speak to the gentleman, on business of importance.

He arose to depart. “Sir,” said
Henry

Henry, "will you not please to sign first the paper I have been reading to you!"

"Oh! ay, just let me look over it again, if you please."

"If you recollect, sir, you read it yourself, and I, also, read it first aloud to you."

"Ah! well, I am really in haste; I have stayed talking so long, and I did appoint a person this morning on business of much consequence, and which is of the utmost importance to him to have it settled without loss of time, as by my interference, he can be saved from distress, and be put in a way of providing comfortably for his numerous family. Ay, ay, I recollect I did read this, and found it all right; so as you say there can be no occasion to go through it again. But stay a little, did not I sign it?"

"You took the pen in your hand, sir," said Henry, "for that purpose, when I, yielding

yielding to a momentary impulse, very rudely interrupted you." He then placed before the good and unsuspecting man, the codicil he had forged to his father's will; which the gentleman signed and departed.

"Ah!" said Meredith, "how bounded is all human excellence. That man is now going to pour the balm of comfort into the bosoms of a distressed family; and he will do much more for them than he has suffered his tongue even to hint at. You and I have imposed upon his goodness and credulity, and struck at him through his sole foible, his ruling passion for the turf. So we are yet the creatures of error and weakness. The man your excellent heart and generous hand has now befriended, whom you say is noble, brave, and his soul the seat of true honour, has yet that haughty pride which would make him scorn a gift which he might owe to your generosity alone, if

offered in the ordinary way of bestowing pecuniary favours. You, who scorn the very name of falsehood, detest it in every shape, and whose constant wish is that man had a window placed before his heart, that every one might see what passes there; yet you have not scrupled to commit a forgery, and blind the eye of law and justice, in the person of him who so well knows how to administer both. I love you for yourself, and I have a joy unfeigned to think I have had it in my power to be of service to you. Yet, I declare I feel that pleasure now doubly enhanced from the generous present you have made me of a little spot of land I was always desirous to possess; therefore I feel myself selfish in this act of friendship, and this blot of worse than imperfection, appears in me most vile."

"I will not have your tongue thus depreciate your exalted worth," said Henry; "when you promised first to
assist

assist and befriend me in this affair, it was purely from motives of reciprocal attachment, and without any prospect of fee or reward ; but man, my dear fellow, was never intended to be a perfect being. Pride and vanity are his predominant foibles ;

“ By that sin, fell the angels ;—”

“ and if man was allowed to attain excellence, he would no longer feel his earth-born dependance on a Superior Power.”

“ I differ from you there,” said Meredith ; “ if he could attain perfection, he would least of all feel pride and vanity predominate in his bosom.”

“ My good fellow,” said Henry, “ we may argue on this theme till we are quite lost, and be never the wiser for our pains :—a truce to all this. I must be off for England without delay. I have arranged every thing ; my passage is taken, and a fair wind is now all that is wanting to transport me from hence.

Then in that blest and beloved island, O England, dear native land, I shall take up my fixed abode, and never do I mean to quit thee again."

There is no necessity of carrying the reader down to the place of embarkation, nor of seeing the trunks of Henry Denbigh Esq. put safe on board; suffice it to say, he lost no time in bidding farewell to Madeira, and soon set sail with a fine breeze, in a swift vessel, and had every prospect of quickly arriving in England.

CHAP. III.

The three Voyagers.

BEHOLD then the prosperous, the wealthy, the youthful Henry Denbigh, gliding over the boundless ocean; his benevolent heart flowing with delight, and his conscience enjoying the tranquil, yet extatic comfort of self-approbation.

High in spirits, blest with uninterrupted health before his departure, it was now perfected by the salubrious climate of the island of Madeira. Ever cheerful and good-humoured, the handsome and ac-

complished Henry Denbigh, on his way to Great Britain might well be asked the question, of what could he be in want not to experience the height of earthly happiness? But with all these gay and brilliant advantages, Henry had yet a void in his bosom, and the more he indulged in communing with himself, so much the more he found that this void could never be filled up by Valencia Mordaunt.

So far as concerns our first traveller. And behold from the scorching clime of India, bowed down by sorrow more than age, with an head whose locks were whitened by care and midnight watchings, ere time could snow on them the hoar frost of age, a venerable looking form, on whose cheeks grief had marked her deep furrows, but on whose brows sat a conscious kind of pride, candour, and virtuous rectitude; pale, thin, miserably clad, and his looks at times cast down
with

with feeling the sense of obligation, for the friendly captain of the Indiaman had given him a passage gratis to England, the land he was born in, but which he had not seen for near twenty years.

For himself he cared but little ; but he had one only daughter residing in London, who struggled against misfortune, and was afflicted with the most calamitous of all human infirmities, blindness. For her he roused himself from apathy, and repaired to England, to seek out, and, if possible, to obtain the situation of a clerk in some counting-house ; where, obscure and unknown, he might vegetate out his existence, as he had for some years done in India, and give the best part of the produce of his labour to his only child, a natural daughter.

The child of illegitimacy claims every sacred support of parental love and protection ; and such claims must ever be assented to by every liberal and feeling

mind. Children of chance, as ye are often misnamed, proscribed by the harsh injustice of man, how can ye be amenable for the faults of your parents? Did ye prevent the holy rite of marriage being performed, before ye were in existence? That rite which would have caused ye to be honoured in society, flattered, courted, and privileged amongst mankind. Oh no! ye were truly innocent.

As this unfortunate traveller had it not in his power to make reparation to the mother for the wrong he had done her, in the ardour of boyish passion, he resolved never to marry, and he once had reason to hope that fortune's favours would have put it in his power to have made equal provision for his daughter as if she had been a *legitimate* child.

She married, with his consent, an officer of merit, but of little fortune, and following him to Egypt, lost her sight; which afflicting loss commenced in what
the

the French so aptly termed in that campaign, a *murage*. It was but little attended to at first. Her husband soon fell among the slain, and she repaired to England, where, in a very short time after her arrival, she became totally blind.

With nothing but her pension to subsist on, she yet contrived to support herself with the kind contributions of the charitable and humane. But charity, human charity, will at length get cold, languid, and weary, and often tire in pursuit of one object, or yield to the solicitations of what she may imagine seems more *aggravated* distress.

This unfortunate female deprived of the first of faculties and the greatest of all earthly happiness, the "visual ray," was an officer's widow. It was argued by those who now began to withhold their customary donations, that she had a pension; other afflicted objects had not a shilling in the world, but what they

might gain from voluntary contributions. What can be said?—Charity, divine charity, yet exists; and the whole treasures of an whole empire cannot administer to the wants of all.

She had kept up a regular correspondence with her father, and friendship's soothing balm yet administered to her comfort, though her friend had not the power of affording her pecuniary relief.

This affectionate friend wrote her letters to her father, and read to the poor captain's widow the answers of that excellent parent.* The distresses of his daughter brought him speedily to England, that he might be near her, and, if possible, administer to her wants and afford her comfort, through the exertions of his own industry.

There are two of my voyagers from different parts of the globe! and now, behold a third, from one of the United States of America. For he, at the same time,

time, is rapidly making his way for the "snug little island."

He was of a little, thin, spare body, with a sharp face, something like that of a weazle. The chief character of his countenance evinced shrewdness and craft; yet, notwithstanding, there was painted on it a certain look of humility and contrition which rendered it not unamiable, and which seemed to inspire confidence and throw off restraint, in the person who might have occasion to address him.

He had but very little baggage with him; but, carefully sewed up in part of a beaver's skin, he had some papers, which, bound tight round his body, he never separated from night nor day.

He wore a little brown scratch wig, which sat as close to his head as if it had been pasted there; the best of his dress consisted of a snuff-coloured coat, with

yellow buttons, blue worsted stockings, and thick shoes, with little old-fashioned silver buckles.

The sea-stock which he laid in was very small; he lived chiefly on hard eggs, biscuit, salt Newfoundland cod, and now and then a bit of pickled pork and molasses, by way of a treat. Yet, as I said before, there is a certain atmosphere about man, which makes us soon discern what he is; and by this was the above little man so completely surrounded, that he was pronounced to be *rich*; and there was an odd kind of quaintness about him which seemed to persuade his fellow-passengers, that what he debarred himself from might be perhaps owing to some regimen he was obliged to observe, and which rendered those things *they* almost surfeited on, improper for *him*. But none of them thought that either stinginess, or a greater crime, *necessity*, had any

any share in his privations ; so that he only obtained the appellations of queer fish, curious kind of an animal, and a droll jockey ; expressions which are very frequently made use of, even amongst our most dashing men of high fashion, and serve to prove that the elegant Chesterfield gave his lessons in vain, and that the English are by no means ready *élèves* in his school of the graces.

Now I have put my travellers all on board, and as two of them sat sail much sooner than Henry Denbigh from Madeira, I must beg leave to observe, that they were all of them, at the same time, in sight of England ; and in which situation I must leave them at present, to revert to other characters in my history.

But though I declared, in the commencement of this work, that I was ambitious of pleasing all tastes, yet I do not mean, to resort to the practice of
book-

book-making to please any one, nor spin out my narrative to five dry and prolix volumes, but continue to relate every incident in as few words as possible; nor is it to please the lovers of minute anecdote that I have given so circumstantial an account of these three voyagers, as they are all essential to the other characters in this unvarnished tale.

Novelty is acceptable in almost any shape, and I think there is no one, as he impartially *considers* my work, but what will say it is *unique* in its kind; but so numerous are the original incidents that have come under my observation, which I have also carefully listened to and reflected on, that it is impossible for me to pen down my ideas upon them all, or even take any of them in regular succession; they present themselves in a mingled mass, and I write not much unlike, I believe, the Author of "*Thinks*

I to myself,"—whatever comes uppermost.

Now Mrs. Clarkson, who had such a veneration for authorship, could very readily have furnished the scandal-mongers with three or four good stout close-printed volumes of private anecdotes in high life, never before offered to the public, and what really came within her own knowledge and observation; and which, though she had gleaned them behind the counter of her husband's shop, were nevertheless authentic, and belonging to those who moved in the most elevated sphere in this metropolis. But she was crazy after romance, particularly that which was historical, which she declared so improving for young people. And if she had ever made an attempt at writing, she often used to declare it should be an Historical Romance founded on William's conquest over England; where,
it

it is ten chances to one, but she would have placed the Heptarchy after that conquest. But Mrs. Clarkson was not singular, we are all apt to mistake our *talent*.

CHAP. IV.

Subterfuge and Artifice.

AS I shall be extremely busy after my three travellers have landed and arrived in London, in providing for them and the rest of my characters in this my little motley world of about six hundred pages, I must during the conclusion of their watery journey, perform my promise of *considering* the work I mention in my title-page, as I shall not have much time to devote to the *Thinking* Author of the work in question hereafter.

A

A gentleman in whose company I chanced to be yesterday, remarked that parties now ran very high; and I could not forbear just now, as I reflected on what he said, thinking that the present *Lord Kilgarnock* shews himself, in the latter part of the second volume of his *Thinkings*, to be a very time-serving peer; for he expressly says, he is a friend to the present ministry, and when the opposition come to be ministry, he will immediately join *them*. (Vol. II. p. 198.) And in p. 209 he declares he was looking two ways at once; "*one eye fixed upon the hazard of change, the other upon the imperfection of all human undertakings*." As he was possessed of this convenient squint it is a pity he did not make his *work* more consistent, by looking over two pages at once, and making them better agree with each other; for can any thing be so contradictory as his prolix remarks upon servants, which really take up near the
fourth

fourth part of the last volume? He argues how much better the servants were in ancient times than now; and the very quotations he has given from Lucilius and Seneca prove the contrary, though he takes care to remind you, by saying, "Remember this was written five hundred years ago."—See note on page 156, vol. II. But old Seneca was certainly too fond of equality, and if he made companions of his servants, he must have expected they would not reverence him. Speaking of more modern days, he quotes the Emperor Frederic, as complaining of his servants on his death-bed. But hold;—am I not insensibly filling up a page or two of *my* last volume, about servants? But how then can I even *partially* consider the little work of *Thinks I to myself?* since they are a subject which takes up so large a space in the second volume. Be assured, I can only notice such a way of filling up

a book, to deprecate it as a subterfuge unworthy an author.

A work which has gone through six editions in a very short period of time, must, one would naturally imagine, have great merit, and could not owe its success to the mere popularity or interest of its author; but as I have not discernment to find out this very singular merit, I only dared *partially* to *consider* those parts which struck me most forcibly, either by their incongruity, subterfuge of *book-making*, or those sentiments which accorded with my own ideas.

I well know the partiality of this country in regard to authors, and how much popular opinion carries along with it all its votaries to the idol of the present day. Many publishers will suffer a good work to die in obscurity, because the writer is not an author of known celebrity. These are a set of half-learned, pedantic
men

men, who, negligent of merit, let it rust, because they are fearful a few volumes may lie unsold on their shelves. Thank Heaven, however, they are not so all! There are a select few, who certainly do honour to the literary business.

Some authors have been so unfortunate as to be thrown into the back-ground in the commencement of their literary progress, and all the future efforts of the injured and unsuccessful writer may be again exerted in vain to build up a name, or obtain that celebrity which might have been his or her lot, if it had not been clouded in its first rising.

But to treat of the tricks of some scribblers, self-denominated authors, is a field too large for me to enter upon, and I must leave it to those who are more fond of writing voluminous works than myself.

I must now, dear reader, with your permission, return to some of my characters,

ters, who make a conspicuous figure in my history.

Many object to digressions ; and yet I dare say, mine will be read, however dull and dry, by somebody. If the author of "*Thinks I to myself,*" or any of his numerous admirers, get hold of my book, the digressions, especially those which treat on that important subject, will be the only part perhaps they will read. The novel reading lady will be sure to skip them ; so, in order to please her, as well as others, I will go on now with my narrative.

Mrs. Cameron, after innumerable hints given from Lady Dorimon, which, at length concluded in saying, " she did not want *no* hangers on in *her* house," was very happy on the receipt of a letter from her brother to quit it. This letter brought to her the pleasing intelligence that he had taken an house in Arundel-street, in the Strand, to which she must repair

repair as soon as possible, preside over it, and at his table, *as* his sister, but take the name of Brown, while he should be called Captain Hamilton. She then bade farewell to Grosvenor-place, and informed the Knight and his lady that she was going to Scotland.

When she arrived at her brother's, she left off corking her light eyebrows, threw off her black wig, and replaced it with a red one; whitened her skin with pearl powder; and it was impossible almost for any one to discover Mrs. Cameron in Mrs. Brown. Meek, diffident, and gentle in her manners, she appeared no longer the grave, pedantic governess, sententious, solemn, and inflexible; she was an interesting widow, smiling and affable, delicate in health, though at times gay as Euphrosyne; checked at those times by her anxious brother, on account of her fragile constitution. Her brother, the polite and serious, though agreeable
Captain

Captain Hamilton, lately returned from the Island of Gorée, where he had formerly distinguished himself with courage and bravery.

Jenkins, the enterprising but dishonest Jenkins, chose this central part of the town as the most proper place for watching and catching dupes of every description from all quarters, as he was soon in the City, and soon at the West end of London ; and both himself and his sister were more likely to remain free from discovery, than if situated either at the court or city end of the metropolis, or even near the new squares.

He now only wanted a male coadjutor or two, to assist him in some of his plots ; but as yet there were, at present, no one, whom he could dare trust ; he was obliged to content himself with the aid of his artful sister.

He got acquainted, after frequenting several coffee-houses, with two young men
possessed

possessed of more money than wit; and with the assistance of some gamblers, with whom he had formed a degree of intimacy at the different gaming-houses, he was in a fair way of easing them of a good part of that burthen with which fortune had laden them; while the interesting Mrs. Brown was so sweetly attentive, her suppers so elegant, her manners so refined, her wit so lively, and at the same time so good-natured, that the young gentlemen declared her far superior to the *youthful* beauties they were acquainted with; and the notice they took of her, and the attentions they paid her, made her begin to indulge the hope that she should, perhaps, sooner than she had at first expected, have the happiness of gaining a third husband.

Captain Hamilton affected tenderly to watch her, and would say to her—"Do, my dear Maria, endeavour to check your vivacity; your spirits are beyond your
VOL. III. D strength.

strength. You know how fearful I am of your going into a decline." The lady then would sigh, and affect the most delicate hectic cough imaginable.

However, this swindling brother and sister found they were not in a way to procure a *rapid* fortune. What was gained in one evening was scarce sufficient, when Jenkins had received his share, to continue the expence of their suppers and entertainments. A bold push, they both agreed, must be made; for this plan would never do.

"I have a great mind," said Mrs. Cameron, to get a white wig, dye my face of a sallow-colour, and turn fortune-teller; for the credulity of the English, even in this nineteenth century is astonishing. And, I am told, there is now in Paris, one of these modern diviners who keeps her carriage, and has a considerable establishment, at the expence of public folly."

"I

" I know her name," replied Jenkins ;
" it is the famous Mademoiselle Lemornant."

" The very same," said Mrs. Cameron.
" And now hear me what I mean to do. I will personate this Mademoiselle Lemornant, and give out that I am just arrived from Paris ; speak broken English, put on a brown scratch, and always speak my oracles behind a thick black crape veil, which will be very imposing, and give an air of mystery to all I may utter. I will take a small lodging near Fitzroy-square, deliver my oracles in the morning, from ten to three, then return home to you, and be the interesting and agreeable Mrs. Brown, your sister."

" The scheme is excellent," said Jenkins. " And, oh ! could you, dear sister, cut the cards to be the most rich, the most powerful, and the best portioned amongst women ! But should you, my dear Pythoness, be so ignorant of your

own future fate, as not to foresee, when the officers of police are coming to drag you before justice,—what shall we do then?"

"Let me alone," said the sister, "I do not want foresight."

"Then, my venerable prophetess," said Jenkins, "I, like the Jackall, will start the prey which you are to devour."

"Oh! I am not uneasy," replied Mrs. Cameron; "I know that those who apply to me will be chiefly ladies; and there are a thousand ways of finding out what a pretty woman is about; ay, her very thoughts, her actions, sentiments, and desires."

"Why, yes," said Jenkins, "they are confined pretty much to the same circle. If they are young, sprightly and handsome, they have lovers of course; they receive *billet doux*, and they answer them. Perhaps a young wife has a jealous husband, and an impassioned lover; an only child

child has a rigid parent, who destines her to a rich alliance which she detests; and I am sure I need not tell you to be always against the husband, and for the lover, if you find he is rich and likely to reward you well for your prophecy."

"No, indeed you need not tell me. But think only, my dear Tom, how many predictions may be built on the foundations you just enumerated; and out of an hundred things which I may tell them, perhaps two may chance to be accomplished. Therefore, though I deceive them fourscore and eighteen times, they will implicitly believe me; and if I foretell that a blooming beauty shall live to a great age, and she should chance to die in the flower of her youth, I am not afraid of her coming from the other world to reproach me with having cheated her of her money."

"I do not dislike your scheme," said the brother, "but I think it better for
D-3 you

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you to be near me; it is too retired about Fitzroy-square. However, we will go to rest now, and in the morning, "*I'll consider of it!*"

CHAP. V.

Surprises.

LET us now pass over some months, and our history will become by that means more interesting. Behold my three travellers arrived in London. Henry Denbigh too at his elegant mansion in Portman-square, under painted cielings, and surrounded by gilded walls, resting from the fatigues of his journey under a bed of softest down.

In the little parlour of his daughter's humble dwelling, on the Surrey side of
D 4 Westminster

Westminster-bridge, see the interesting old man from India, who prest to his aching heart his only child, whose eyes, closed for ever, could no more behold him, but whose joy seemed without alloy when she received the paternal embrace, and heard his much loved voice hail her by the name of daughter.

A frugal repast, but to her a feast, was prepared by her kind friend; he ate but little, and retired to a chamber to court repose on an humble and hard bed without curtains, but which was the best she had to give.

But, O Elford, it was not the hardness of thy bed that kept thee waking; comparing thy present state to what thou mightest have been, and reflecting on the baseness of mankind, and the indigence of thy beloved and afflicted daughter, caused all thy efforts vain to obtain an hour's sleep; for

“ He

" He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes,
Swift on his downy pinions flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear."

But behold the little sharp-faced man from America, anxiously looking out for a very cheap lodging near Clement's-Inn. At length he obtained an apartment in Wych-street, and in the first floor of the same house. Mrs. Cameron, under the name of Mademoiselle Lemornant, delivered her oracles.

In the mean time, Valencia Mordaunt was going headlong to ruin and misery, giving way to her ruling passion for play, and her infatuation for Sir George Warrington. Henry Denbigh lost no time in repairing to Mr. Mordaunt's; for his vanity had made him suppose that Valencia was really in love with him, by the sorrow she had seemed to evince at his departure for Madeira, and which was some time before her heart had entirely

given way to the fatal passions which now enslaved it; and she certainly was sorry to lose so elegant a *reputed* lover, as the fashionable and much admired Mr. Denbigh.

Good nature was the predominant feature in the breast of the amiable Henry. He could not endure the idea that so beautiful a creature should sigh in vain for him; and as his heart was disengaged, and he was approved of by the father, he really looked upon his marriage with Valencia as a decided thing.

He was sensibly shocked at the visible alteration he beheld in her person. When he first entered, she was driving away intruding thought at her piano-forte and singing that highly esteemed favourite *monotonous* air of *Robin Adair*. She turned round, she presented her hand, but neither with grace or cordiality, though she made an effort at both. Henry looked at her eyes, once so uncommonly beautiful.

beautiful, bright, and sparkling, now sunk and hollow from the late vigils of the card table. For a moment her eye fell before his anxious gaze, and her long eyelash rested on her glowing cheek; when suddenly recovering her pride and haughtiness, she raised it, looked on him with dignity, and said to him,—"Sir, my father is in his library; I will order the servant to conduct you to him. Good morning." So saying, she quitted the apartment, leaving Henry in profound reflection and thought, but which, however, were not mingled with any disappointment at the coolness of his bride elect, towards whom, in that character, he felt more indifferent than ever, but in whose fate and happiness he could not but be deeply interested.

Mr. Mordaunt had a beautiful country-seat at a short distance from London on the Epsom-road; at which seat he always kept his birth-day and that of Lady Amelia,

which fell on a few days after that of her brother. There they made themselves truly popular, by dispensing numerous charities and benefits to the poor. Valencia, who always did what she pleased, declared positively to her aunt and father that she would not go unless her dear Charlotte Clarkson was allowed to accompany her. A pressing invitation was therefore sent, and gratefully accepted.

While they set off in Mr. Mordaunt's elegant coach and four for this excursion, Henry Denbigh was arranging his business with his lawyer in London, assuring him that he had found this codicil to his father's will in Madeira, and that he had therein bequeathed to his cousin's husband, Captain Littlefame, the sum of thirty thousand pounds sterling; and with this codicil, accompanied by the duped lawyer, Henry set off one morning to Mrs. Clarkson's, in Allsop's-buildings, New-road.

They

They were much charmed with the fine person, and the sweet and elegant manners of this amiable young man; his errand, no doubt, enhanced the value of all his attractions. Captain Littlefame expressed a regret that he had not seen Mr. Denbigh before he died; "but," added he, as the tears of joy stood in his eye, for the prosperity of his beloved granddaughter, "peace to his memory, and let me think I see the father in the son."

The delighted Henry soon took his leave, gratified and happy as having been the dispenser of happiness and of what he thought justice; and immediately set off to pay a visit to a friend who resided at Winchester.

Charlotte was instantly sent for to town, and the Captain without loss of time made his will, declaring her his sole heir. Mrs. Clarkson wished directly to take a larger house.

"Why, what is the matter with this,
my

my dear Martha?" said her father. "Oh, I am so attached to this happy roof! It was here I felt the sweet effects of your filial affection; here your kindness made me forget the outrages of fortune, while with a tender and delicate hand you drew out the sharp sting of poverty. Oh! then let us enjoy the gifts and favours of fortune in this tranquil and happy abode! I love, as I sit in his easy chair, to recall to my memory, the affectionate manner in which you first placed me in it; and I really think that my removal from this house would accelerate my death. What is there wanting? The apartments are well fitted up and genteely furnished; they are truly comfortable, and, in my opinion, all of them large enough. Keep two more servants, if you please, there is room enough for them, and I should wish you should."

A man and two more maid servants were accordingly hired, a professed cook,

cook, and a maid to wait on the two ladies, while Betty's wages were raised, and she was installed in the office of house-maid.

Poor Charlotte, well as she loved the misguided Valencia, was extremely glad to return to town; as, after having been bound by the most solemn promises of secrecy, she had been compelled to listen to a very unpleasant piece of confidence. The unhappy Valencia had resolved to escape from the parental roof, and had fixed the time of her elopement, which was to take place on the very night after that day in which Charlotte was to set off for town. The seat of Mr. Mordaunt had a summer-house at the extent of the grounds, which looked into the main road, and from thence, at the hour of ten at night, while her aunt was seated at piquet with her father, in which situation she determined on some plea or other to
place

place them, she would escape and fly to the arms and protection of Sir George Warrington, who with a faithful friend, a Captain Hamilton, with whom Sir George had but lately become acquainted, would wait for her in a post chaise and four, to take instant flight to Scotland, and be indissolubly united.

In vain Charlotte endeavoured to dissuade, and in vain Valencia implored her lovely friend to accompany her. The weeping girl intreated her to *consider* and reflect on what she owed to the anxious feelings of a mother and an infirm and aged grandfather. Valencia was somewhat softened, and when Charlotte said, " O Valencia, I should better act the part of a real friend, did I try all in my power to prevent, instead of countenancing this rash, this almost worse than *imprudent* step. Oh! had you confided this fatal secret to any other sooner than me.

me. You know my strict ideas of friendship, and the duties imposed on youth to each other, which ought to be equally binding as those of more prudent years. You know that my promise is given to be secret, and for worlds I would not betray you. But oh! suffer me yet to advise and implore you to put a stop immediately to your rash intentions. I, myself, will be the bearer of your letter to Sir George. I will risk every thing to serve you."

"My generous girl," said Valencia, taking her by the hand, "I know well what you are; but my resolution is fixed, and nothing upon earth can stagger it. Now hear me farther," added she, snatching up a large phial of laudanum which stood on her dressing table, "behold my resource. If detected, if prevented in the pursuit of my heart's dearest wish, then I swallow this immediately, and sleep away the remembrance of disappointed

pointed love and too timid friendship, to wake no more."

Charlotte shuddered. She again promised inviolable secrecy; she even promised, though she could not accompany her to assist her; but her being suddenly called to town on business, as her mother's letter informed her, of pleasing importance, she was released from the painful task of having any hand in the elopement of her friend.

Arrived in London, her joy at her dear grandfather's good fortune would have been unalloyed, had not her heart been continually torn by the thoughts of her friend's rashness. When the hour of eleven struck, on that night which was to decide her fate, her tears, which she had all the evening with difficulty suppress, now fell, nor could she conceal them.

"What is the matter, my love?" said the anxious mother. "Now with every prospect

prospect of happiness, riches, comfort of every kind, what can mean these tears?"

"I know not," replied Charlotte; "I feel myself uncommonly deprest; suffer me to bid you good night."

"Why, yes," said the unsuspecting Captain, looking first at Charlotte then at his watch, "we have all sat up long enough. You have tired the girl to death, Martha, with carrying her about from shop to shop the very day after her journey. God bless you, my love," added he, as his grand-daughter approached the door, "but never let me see you give way to being low-spirited without a cause. The *real* ills of life are great and many, let us not choke up it's flowers by bitter herbs and thorns of our own planting. Good night."

Charlotte curtsied, and made a motion with her head, but her heart was too full to suffer her to speak, and retiring to her

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her chamber, in anxious fears that the *real ills of life* were likely soon to overwhelm her poor friend, she literally wept herself to sleep.

CHAP. VI.

Dissipation, &c.

LADY DORIMON was now very soon brought to declare that Miss Clarkson was the most *beautifullest* and the most *niciest* girl she *knowed*; while young Dorimon thought his prayers had been really heard, for his Charlotte was possessed of a good fortune, and he immediately asked the consent of his parents, and became the declared lover of the *now* amiable Miss Clarkson.

Charlotte

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Charlotte fancied she felt quite happy, but she experienced nothing of that extatic kind of bliss which she had read of in books. Young Dorimon was really all rapture, but he could in no wise inspire it. At the sight of Major Farrington, she felt her heart bound in her bosom, with the most delightful sensation; but she discouraged it as much as possible, as she now certainly *was* the bride elect of another: besides, the Major himself considerably deadened, what the author of "*Thinks I to myself,*" would call these *bump, bump, bumpings*, in his favour; for meeting him more often in company than she formerly used to do, she witnessed on too many occasions, a repellant pride and haughtiness in his manners and disposition, which must always meet with a disapprobation almost bordering on dislike, from such sweetness as her's.

There is a kind of love, which makes those who feel it very much resemble the
snarling

snarling cur in the manger, not profiting themselves by the blessing within their grasp, yet vexed and angry that another should possess what they wish for themselves, while they seek not by the means in their power to attain it.

Major Farrington never felt much jealousy at Charlotte's girlish engagement with young Dorimon; but now finding friends approve, settlements spoken of, and every thing in the fairest train in the world towards a wedding, he envied Dorimon; he sometimes almost hated himself, and found Charlotte more adorable than ever; not that her fortune weighed any thing in his opinion. Charlotte Clarkson, without a shilling, and the daughter of a gentleman, he then would not have hesitated a moment, as soon as his heart told him how he loved her, to have requested her hand. But what relationship is so dear and near as that of a father? Fathers build up a
name

name for their progenitors, or sink them to the dust. So argued Major Farrington; and oh! could he possibly endure the reflection that the father of *his* wife was a man-milliner!

But Miss Clarkson was now seen in the first circles; she was cited, made much of every where. Men, quite equal in rank, family, and fortune to Major Farrington, were among her admirers, and were not ashamed loudly to express their regrets at her being already engaged, and how much they envied Mr. Dorimon's lot. Sometimes he would almost resolve to bear the censures of that part of the world which composod his proud family; but he took so long a time to "*consider of it,*" that the settlements were begun to be drawn up, the bride's jewels bespoke, and even the happy day began to be talked of and hinted at.

In the mean time Valencia, now Lady Warrington, had returned from her Northern

Northern tour. Her father, proud and inexorable, and her aunt, merciless now, as she had been frail in her youth, urged him on never to see her more. He wrote her an harsh and severe epistle, in which he told her, that he had no objection to the rank of the man she had married; which rank made him yet tolerated in society; but he never would acknowledge as a son, the man whose extravagance and prodigality had reduced him to such a state of poverty as to render him not only a gambler, but a known associate of black-legs and sharpers.

Valencia had always given herself up, as we remarked in the first volume, more to her enthusiastic imagination than her heart. The charm which had fascinated her excellent understanding was now broken; the fatal contrast glared fearfully before her eyes, and blamable as she had been, she had not even the satisfaction of finding any excuse for her fault.

Her wounded pride made her at first resolve to enclose back the bank bill of an hundred pounds, which her father had sent her, for present exigencies; her rapacious husband, however, seized it, and the mask he had long worn, slipped aside, and almost discovered his real character. Still she was resolved her spirit should be unbroken, and she hastily averted her painful remembrance from her once splendid home and the circles she had long embellished. The future appeared to her a dreadful abyss, and her former short life, only a shining vision, of which her present disgrace was the mournful reality; and always a prey to the most tumultuous emotions of the passions, she looked forward only with horror at her future privations.

The *soi-disant* Captain Hamilton soon quitted the society of the Warringtons, when he found there was nothing more to be gained from them. Lady Warrington

ton had sold some valuable jewels she took with her, which she had replaced, as many other ladies of quality do, by *false*. The real ones had brought them six hundred pounds to begin the world with, and the Captain received two hundred and fifty for the part he had taken in this excursion.

Lady Warrington lost no time in seeing her friend, whom she fancied she loved better than ever, and to her alone she promised she would be obliged; and rejoiced to find that she would now have it in her power to assist her without hurting herself, both as Miss Clarkson and as Mrs. Dorimon. Yes, had Valencia chose to own it to herself, she looked upon her friend as a resource, always ready to be applied to in any emergency, and therefore she need not give way to despondency.

How easy is the assimilation of manners and morals when gamesters unite. Lady

Warrington was insensibly becoming as rapacious as her husband ; she borrowed continually of her friend, and the heiress to thirty thousand pounds, and all her mother's property, not inconsiderable, often knew not what it was to have a single shilling in her possession, not daring to ask her mother for a fresh supply of pocket—I mean *ridicule*—money, as Mrs. Clarkson was very liberal in her allowance to the future Mrs. Dorimon. The friendship however of Charlotte, though it might be misplaced, knew no bounds, and her money always became Lady Warrington's almost as soon as received ; who, according to her determinations, had opened a faro bank at her elegant lodgings in Argyle-street ; which, however, did not answer her ladyship's expectations, for the character of Sir George was too well known to make it much frequented.

In all the houses where Charlotte
visited

visited she had not yet met her bountiful relation, Mr. Denbigh, though she heard his praises resounded wherever she went ; and she could now hear them and listen to them without the unpleasant emotion she before experienced, when she used to reflect how unkind had been his father to her dear grandsire, but now he had shewn, as she thought, in the hour of sickness and death, that he had repented his want of friendship ! she, therefore, now wished for the time when she should have the pleasure of seeing his son ; but his stay at Winchester had been prolonged much beyond the time he had intended.

Before I close this chapter, I must say a word or two on the character of Sir George Warrington. He might actually be said to possess a love of gaming from his very cradle ; nothing could drag the cards out of his little hands, when he once got hold of them. When he was yet an infant of four years old, his nurse

taught him *all-fours* and *beggar my neighbour* ; and, indeed this last was what he was now continually employed in endeavouring to effect.

From a genteel academy he went to Eton, still increasing in his propensity for play. In a few months after he was placed there, he lost his mother ; and in about two years his father followed her to the grave.

At his death he succeeded to the baronetage, and at the age of one and twenty, became master of about ten thousand pounds per annum. And now his fortune, no very large one for these times of luxury and expence, for a nobleman, flew away like chaff before the wind. He took a pride and pleasure in not only indulging himself in his darling recreation of playing enormously high, but would lay bets of immense value on maggots, flies, the colour of a cat's nose, or the exact length of a dog's ear. All his amusements were
unbecoming

unbecoming the gentleman of a respectable and ancient family, however fashionable they may be deemed. Sir George never drew his sword except in a drunken quarrel, and while he attended the school of pugilism, he placed himself with all the insolence of pride, though in the affected garb of equalizing plainness, with Cribb, Molyneux, and other professors of the boxing art. Every other hour which he could spare from the gaming table was regulated by the tandem, the dog-cart, and the barouche; while even the other members of the four-in-hand laughed at him, and despised him for his folly, as he rode through the street chewing tobacco, stopping at the tavern doors, and calling aloud for a glass of Geneva; while, as he rattled out of town, a noble friend seated behind, as silly as himself, blew an horn through all the wondering towns and villages.

His nerves unstrung, his health shaken,

by continual dissipation, and his fortune reduced to a very low ebb, Sir George gave up all other pursuits to attach himself solely to the gaming table.

There, night after night, he suffered himself to be plucked by those harpies, who attend for the ruin of young fools of fortune ; and at the age of six and twenty he had run through every shilling of his estate. He now associated himself with a set of men, who, once rich like himself, had lost all they were worth, and who by practising with the cards and dice a little *innocent* chicanery, as they called it, contrived to raise enough to keep themselves from want.

But this was not enough for the extravagant Sir George. He had dipped into this dishonourable practice, he plunged yet deeper, and became the companion of those characters who are notorious and yet tolerated at some of the gaming-houses in this metropolis ; amongst these
he

The society of Sir George Warrington now began to be shunned by people of correct manners and respectability. He was, however, yet cordially received in those houses where play is the favourite pursuit. Lady Amelia Mordaunt declared no man played so scientifically; and while she eagerly gave herself up to her cards, she took no care of the niece, to whom she was afterwards so inflexible; and though Mr. Mordaunt did not much approve the character of Sir George, yet as he was the son of his most particular friend, and a man of rank, he endured him, little imagining his daughter would place her affections on a man of broken fortunes, then near thirty years of age, and by no means prepossessing in his person.

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insensible to female charms, but the resplendant beauty of Valencia, which was of that proud and striking kind which suited his taste, made him her most zealous admirer. She loved play—she was a congenial soul. “Love,” says the proverb, “produces love.” Sir George knew how to speak its language, and breathe its vows in as fascinating a manner as any one, for he had become an adept in duplicity. Valencia was caught by his artifice ; and he really loved her. But indigence, and the continual vexation of his harassed mind, longing to quit the detestable society he had entangled himself with, yet plunging still farther in the ruinous gulph, all his thoughts, all his wishes, centered in the *fortune* of Mr. Mordaunt’s daughter, as she was an only child, and her father a man of immense wealth.

In an evil hour she consented to elope
with

with him. He saw how wayward was her will, and how much her aunt and father indulged her in all her wishes ; this gave him hopes that when she was married, and the evil irremediable, her father would not withhold his forgiveness, nor what was better still—her fortune.

CHAP. VII

An extraordinary Personage.

THE evening after Henry Denbigh returned from Winchester, he strolled into his favourite coffee-house called the Hindostanee. The waiter shewed him into a room, in which was already seated at a table, a gentleman in a very remarkable dress; and what little Henry could see of it, appeared to be something resembling that of a bramin. But thinking, perhaps, it might be some of the Dutch merchants from Canton, in China, who

who often affect to dress like the natives, as he could not distinguish well from the stranger leaning his head down on the table as if he was asleep, Denbigh applied himself to reading a Calcutta Newspaper, and was silent.

The gloom of the apartment surprised him, and he was just about to ring for another candle, when a gentle sigh, proceeding from the place where the stranger sat, caused him to look up, and to his great astonishment, he saw a pale, bluish kind of lambent flame over his head.

Whether it was this light, or owing to Henry's want of recollection, or from the situation he sat in, Henry had no remembrance of having seen him before. The face of the stranger appeared to him a compound of quiet inanimation and tender softness; the downcast pensive air, however, bespoke it Indian.

Henry had a fine spaniel with him. The stranger kept looking first at him, then

then at his master. When he looked at the dog his countenance became most expressive.

Recollection flashed on the mind of Henry; his heart leaped in his bosom with an emotion he knew not how to account for; yet it was tempered with awe, for he thought he did not now behold an inhabitant of the earth.

At length the stranger said, "Henry, Henry;" and from the lips of the astonished Henry, was feebly uttered, "My dear Nahred!"

The lambent flame dispersed; Henry drew near the table. "Good Heavens!" said he, "do I then yet behold you enjoying the blessings of life and health? I thought that a tyger had torn you in pieces on the plains of Hindostan."

"I am yet an inhabitant of the world," replied Nahred, "but I am about to quit it for a celestial dwelling. Hearken him, who has been punished for his transgressions,

transgressions, but who now shudders at the thought of displacing the ever living soul. Behold, and hear a *Bramin*! Be virtuous Henry, be compassionate, and so shall the term also of *thy* chastisements be shortened."

"I am sure," said Henry, "that the Power Supreme, who watches over me and thee, sees all nations, and every faith with the same eye of universal benevolence. I was born and educated a Christian, and if my deeds are good, I shall receive a *Christian's* reward. Every faith holds out future *happiness* to its believer, but every faith teaches, that to attain it we must *deserve* it."

"I was a man like thee," said Nahred ;
"and a transgressor. Born and educated a Bramin, my sins are of a peculiar redness of dye ; for a Bramin's faith teaches him to preserve, and on no account destroy, the vital and ever during spark of life which the GREAT BEING has infused into
the

the very smallest of his creatures. I say not your faith, but often your education, corrupt and full of error, teaches you to hold in contempt those laws of humanity, which, when the cruelty engendered by that contempt shall touch you in your brutal state, Oh! how keenly will you feel it. But O Henry, how goes the hour? My spirit has not long to remain on earth, and I must watch the fleeting hours as they steal away."

Henry laid his fine gold repeater on the table.

"O Henry," resumed Nahred, "I transgressed against a Bramin's creed, a Bramin's principles! I yielded to the clamours of hunger, opposed my feeble reason against the sacred rules of my religion; and blood of beasts, birds, and fishes were shed to gratify its calls. But deep and bitter have been my punishments, for thus daring to dislodge the soul implanted in these terrestrial vehicles.

"It:

" It is now five years since I last met you in the East. Since that time I have past through such various changes, that there is scarce one folly or misery, in the whole human catalogue but what I have experienced. In the body of the tyger, who destroyed me, I past over to this country; crammed in a den over Exeter Change, where I had scarce room to turn my body, I was not only compelled to bear all the tyrannic insolence of a keeper who almost starv'd me, but to accumulate my sins by an unconquerable appetite after the flesh of animals. I have next chattered in a monkey—I have been a groveling swine—I have been a whining puppy; and then again I rose to, not the *elevated*, but to the *degraded* station of man. A scavenger, a link-boy at the play-houses, and an attendant in waiting at the greasy feasts of a Lord Mayor.

"Did

“ Did I rise in true consequence by next becoming heir to an immense estate? Alas! on the contrary, nature became yet more *vilely* degraded. I ran horses against time; I drove four-in-hand through the streets, like a madman, heedless of the unoffending and useful pedestrian, or his innocent offspring, as they chanced to cross my path. I gambled away that money which ought to have contributed to the support of my fellow mortals in distress. I lived by accumulating debts to an amount I knew I should never be able to pay, and settled my accounts with my creditors, by breaking my neck from a tandem. I then became the noble animal I had most injured, an *Horse!* but in his most unhappy state, a post-horse. Cruel were the hardships I endured, most bitter my sufferings; travelling all night with speed and diligence, scarce any rest did I experience, but was continually

continually running to please the capricious thirst after the pleasure, the self-interest, or cruelty of others.

“ In this state, however degraded and ill-used by man, I was yet elevated to the most noble, useful, and intelligent of all the creatures of the quadruped kind ; and in that body, like the most scrupulous of my cast, I abhorred the bare idea of satiating my hunger with the life blood of any animal.

“ I gave up the ghost one night after a fatiguing journey of an incessant full gallop, when engaged with three more of my species, I had been employed by a footman to assist him in carrying off his young mistress, a wealthy heiress. My spirit immediately past into the body you now behold, exactly similar, in form, feature, colour, and proportion to that which, about four years before, was left mangled and lifeless amongst my Hindoo brethren.

“ The

“ The god Vishnu appeared to me in the visions of the night, and said, ‘ *Nahred, thy punishment is at an end !* And I now touch on the moment of being translated to a celestial habitation.

“ I wish now to take my passage to India, for with this my last transformation I find myself endued with the spirit of prophecy ; and I know that this vile covering will seem to expire on board the vessel I shall sail in soon after my departure from this country. The sea will receive it, but my spirit will be transported far from the confines of either sea or earth. Alas ! I am, though only one short stage from eternity, yet a mortal ; and mortal wants are yet mine. All means, which money alone can purchase, fail me ; but I shall beg my way through a land, famed for its hospitality to the stranger and the wanderer.”

“ Never, never, most virtuous of men,” said Henry, presenting him his pocket-book.

book! "there are bank-notes, more than sufficient to defray the expence of your voyage. Take what you want; the whole, if you desire it."

"I will take one note or two," replied the Bramin, "just to pay the expence of my journey by land; the rest will be useless." "Help yourself," said Henry, "but I entreat of you not to spare it."

From motives of delicacy then the generous and enthusiastic Denbigh turned away, and leaning against the table, became absorbed in deep contemplation. He had dined with a party of gay young men, and had drank more wine than usual; his imagination and his head were both heated. He made a resolution, however, from that moment to become as rigid a Pythagorean, as a certain *inflated* bookseller. *Inflated*, as Mrs. C——— observes, "she knows not how, whether with pride or *cabbage*!"

Denbigh

Denbigh now looked up to put a question to the Bramin, and to bid him a long and last farewell. He found him vanished, and his pocket-book and gold repeater vanished also!"

He rang for the waiter, who solemnly declared, and with truth, he had seen no such person go out as Mr. Denbigh described. All search after him was vain; and it was equally in vain that Henry continued to advertise his watch, and stop it at the different Pawnbrokers, no tidings whatever could be heard of it.

CHAP. VIII.

The Clerks.

THE marriage of Charlotte with young Dorimon was now so near at hand, that Lady Dorimon, who loved her better and better every day, could not bear for her to be out of her sight; and every hour that Dorimon could spare from the more weighty business of amassing money, he passed in the society of his adored Charlotte. She was, therefore, much more at Grosvenor-place than at home, where Lady Dorimon continually brought her in
her

her carriage, making her take her work or drawings with her in the morning, and remain the whole day with her. She very willingly accepted these invitations, as they furnished her with the excuse of being constantly engaged, and kept her from going often to that dwelling of dissipation and embarrassment, occupied by her friend, the lost Lady Warrington.

Dorimon, unwilling to lose a moment of the society of her he really loved above every thing, except gold, transacted much of his business at his mother's elegant mansion. And Lady Dorimon, saying, she always knewed the young ones liked to be by themselves, when they were sweet-hearts, used to contrive to leave them, to pass their mornings in the parlour alone.

Young Dorimon had a vacancy for a confidential clerk, and for which situation two very different characters applied. The first was a young man of a rich family, and extensive connexions in trade, who,

who, if approved, might be likely, in time, to come down with a considerable sum to be taken as an under partner. All this Dorimon was informed of.

Another person applied for the situation, and Charlotte was in the parlour with Dorimon, when he made the application. Dorimon, while he entreated her not to quit the room, desired, in a protecting haughty kind of manner, that the stranger would proceed on the business he came upon. He was, alas ! unrecommended, poor, and advancing fast towards the winter of age.

“ What ! are you come to offer yourself, sir,” said Dorimon, “ without any recommendation ? ”

“ Yes, sir,” replied the old man ; “ but my integrity is well known by people of true respectability in this metropolis ; and to whom I can refer you.”

“ Well, sir,” said Dorimon, “ I cannot

give you any answer at present, but "*I will consider of it.*"

"No, William," said Charlotte, with a degree of energy, "you must not say you will *consider of it*. You will give this good gentleman a decisive answer, I hope *immediately*."

"It is impossible," said Dorimon.

"Do not say so," said Charlotte, "you certainly can tell him whether or no you will accept his assistance in your *compting-house*."

The poor gentleman looked at the fair and interesting pleader, whose countenance in the cause of humanity, had obtained an expression that was celestial.

"Why all this interest, Charlotte," said Dorimon, "for a person who comes, according to his own account, without any recommendation?"

"Oh! Dorimon," said she, "is there not sufficient in his looks, and does he
not

not tell you he can give you references to characters of the highest respectability?"

"For myself," said the stranger, with a degree of conscious pride, "I would not supplicate, where once the shadow of a doubt had arisen to my prejudice; but I have a child, whose existence depends on my exertions. For her sake I can submit to any thing."

Dorimon looked towards Charlotte; the tear of compassionate tenderness stood in her eye, and Dorimon, softened, turned politely to the stranger, and said, "Call to-morrow about this hour, for I must before I positively engage you, *consider of it.*"

- Charlotte was to go that evening with all the Dorimons to the Theatre. She was to sleep at Grosvenor-place, and with anxious expectancy, she looked forward to the morrow, which she had promised to pass till the evening at Lady Dorimon's, when her mother and grandfather

were to go and escort her home. She made use of every little chastened caress, every powerful persuasion, to make her destined husband promise to engage the respectable and venerable looking stranger.

Dorimon assured her that business could never be transacted in a rash and hasty manner ; but that she might rest assured, that in regard to her request, he should carefully "*consider of it.*"

Sordid and deceptive young man, you then knew that your word, your promise, was given to another. To one whom you thought would add to your store of worldly wealth ; while honour, integrity, and real worth were, because accompanied with poverty, and without the recommendation of powerful friends, rejected.

At half past twelve the next day, the interesting stranger made his appearance.
" Would you wish to retire, Miss Clarkson,
son,

son?" said Dorimon, with the most winning softness.

"O certainly, sir," said she, coldly, "if I interrupt business." At the same time, as he opened for her the door, she cast on him a supplicating glance to intreat him to succour a worthy object in distress.

She retired to a small anti-room, where she could hear every word of the conversation. I like not the conduct of Dorimon, thought she, in this business; it is very mean to be a listener, but I will remain here, and hear a result, which shall determine my future destiny.

"Well, sir," said the young merchant, "I am almost sorry I gave you the trouble of coming again; for I have engaged a young gentleman yesterday. But I should think you might easily obtain the place of under clerk at some of our mercantile houses, if you can obtain

a good character for honesty and sobriety."

"Ah! sir," said the poor gentleman, "I am not used to hear such servile qualifications insisted on."

"Servile!—So then you think it servile to be honest and sober."

"Far from it, sir. I am too much the victim of others dishonesty, not to abhor that as a principle the most vile and degrading to human nature. And when I said the word *servile* it certainly was misplaced; but I meant it as customary to be required in the character of a servant, that he should be *sober* and *honest*. I repeat to you, sir, that I can bring respectable references as to my character as a *gentleman*; and under that title, too often usurped, is comprehended every thing that is worthy or deserving the name of man. Why, sir, did you deceive me yesterday, by saying you would *consider*
of

of it ? Why not give me my final dismission, and not suffer me to cherish fallacious hope?"

"I must say, I think you extremely insolent," said Dorimon. "Am I obliged to give you a place of two hundred a year, because you wish it?"

"Half that sum would satisfy me," said the stranger; "my daughter perishes!"

"Let her work then," said Dorimon, "and help to support you."

"Alas!" said the stranger, "she is blind."

"Ah! well, sir," said Dorimon, "I am very sorry; but put yourself in my place, and would you think of taking a man into your house that comes from nobody knows where? Would not you think you had every reason to suspect him?"

"My lot, sir," said Elford, "is

wretched enough; why then refuse my applications with insult and derision."

"Oh! perhaps," said Dorimon, "that may not be exactly right. But certainly it has a very suspicious appearance, when a man says he has been a gentleman, and is reduced almost to beggary in his old age."

"My misfortunes, sir, are keen enough, and you have cut me to the very soul. But, sir, the time may come, when you may be brought to know, when too late—that he, who never felt pity, can have no right to claim it."

"I want, sir, to hear none of your preaching," said Dorimon; "I have nothing to give away, and you, and your daughter must shift as well as you can: but stop a minute till I have read this letter the servant has just brought me."

Charlotte fell on her knees, and breathed a solemn vow that no power on earth

earth should make her unite her fate to Dorimon's.

"O wretch of iron heart!" said she to herself; "happy, happy hour, which has shewn me thy disposition before it was too late. Those cruel lips that 'thus cold and unpitying' can insult poverty, age, and affliction, shall never, never receive from mine the conjugal embrace; nor that close shut hand be ever joined in mine before the sacred altar."

"Ah!" said Dorimon, "this letter is about you, but I know nothing of the writer, only that he is a man of high flown sentiments, quite the dupe of his imagination, but I believe very poor. You may as well, however, take the letter if it will do you any good."

"I thank you, sir," said Elford, "it may do much, being addressed to you."

"O ay, true, give it me back again. I know nothing of you, that is certain."

"And I see, sir," said the unfortunate

stranger, you are resolutely bent on the determination of not serving me."

"Pshaw!" said Dorimon, unfeelingly; "a denial ought not to sink you so much. You must expect many in this town, before you gain what you require."

"Ah! sir, may you never know the humiliating distress experienced by such denials. A mere monosyllable may sink us to the dust."

"Well, sir," said Dorimon, "I wish you a good morning; I have no time to hear you moralize."

"I have then nothing to hope from your recommendation or assistance."

"Why, my good sir, I know nothing of you. But stop, *I'll consider of it* a little. I'll tell you what, you may take this letter, and say, you called on me, but I had engaged a clerk; at the same time be sure you say I know nothing of you. Stop, I'll write a note to that effect, now *I consider of it* to all whom it
may

may concern, and inclose this letter in it. There, you see what I have said."

" Ah! sir, this equivocal kind of recommendation, will, I fear be of little service to me. Alas! my poor daughter."

O Dorimon, what a victim art thou to that fatal sentence of "*I'll consider of it*"



CHAP. IX.

An unexpected Rencontre.

CHARLOTTE rushed into the hall after the stranger.. "Sir," said she, "will you be pleased to favour me with your daughter's address?"

Elford took a card from his pocket, and presented it to her. "Assure her, sir," said she, "from one who deeply feels for her, that I will take the liberty of calling on her, and of bringing her instant relief."

The agitation, the humid eye, and
glowing

glowing cheek of the fair speaker, were not lost on the old man; he softly articulated the sentence of "Oh! how unlike!"

"Sir," said she, "what did you say?"
 "Are you the sister, madam," said he,
 "of Mr. Dorimon?"

"No, sir," said she, in the hasty heedless impulse of the moment, "I stand in no relationship to Mr. Dorimon's family; nor ever mean it. Good morning, sir. I will be with your daughter immediately."

Scarce knowing what she did, she hastily tied on her bonnet and mantle, and set off, as fast as her feet could carry her, without heeding whither, down Piccadilly; when suddenly the agonising reflection shot across her bosom, that she had not a shilling, yet had promised immediate succour to a distress gentleman!

To ask her mother again for money was impossible. She had given her an ample allowance only the morning before,
 which

which was already disseminated amongst the harpies at Lady Warrington's Faro table. Nor had her mother given her this money, without very severe lectures and animadversions on the crime of prodigality, and wilful extravagance, which her daughter had evinced in so particular a manner by the sudden and shameful expenditure, for shameful it was, in being effected so soon, of the last sum she gave her; but now Mrs. Clarkson solemnly declared, and Charlotte knew she was not a woman to break her word, that she would not give her another halfpenny for a month to come.

Full of this tormenting and painful recollection, Charlotte reached as far as the corner of Albemarle-street. The well-known beneficence and kindness of Major Farringdon rushed on her mind; pure, as those of an angel were her ideas; and prudence never told her that there could be any impropriety in calling at
the

the lodgings of a single gentleman. For any thing that might concern myself alone, thought she, I could never, I am sure, utter the wishes of my heart to Major Farrington; but I well know that his charity and generosity predominate over all his pride, and that he is ever ready to pity and assist the wretched.

She hastened to the door of his house; it was standing open. She almost flew up to the room where he constantly sat, and where she had often seen him, when but a child, she had called on him with her grandfather. The back of the Major, as she thought, was next to her, and she exclaimed as she entered, "Dear Major Farrington, I am come——" The gentleman turned round, and fixed on her a pair of fine dark eyes, but they were not those of Major Farrington! His lips exclaimed, "Oh Heavens! is it possible?"

At length the gentleman seemed to look at her with a degree of saucy freedom

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dem. He drew a chair for her, and brought his own seat close to her, offering to take her by the hand. She withdrew it, with unaffected modesty, but her mind was too sorrowful for her to assume, what she seldom had much of naturally—dignity!

“ I surely cannot have mistaken the house,” said she. “ No, that is impossible,” she added, as she cast her eyes on a picture of her own drawing over the chimney piece. “ Is Major Farrington at home, sir?”

“ No, he has rode out as far as Chelsea. I am sure he little imagined the happiness which awaited him this morning in the visit of so lovely a young lady. He desired me to stay here till he came back, as I requested to read a book which he will not suffer to go out of his library; but now I behold the fairest work that was ever given to the world.” Charlotte without

without paying the least attention to this compliment, burst into tears.

"How truly unfortunate I am," said she.

"And shall such loveliness know misfortune," said the gentleman, "while it is in my power to remove it? Is Farringdon so insensible of his own happiness as to desert such a treasure? For much I fear——"

"O sir," said Charlotte, who was not such an innocent fool as not now to find out that she had been guilty of some little impropriety in calling on a single gentleman, "you are I see labouring under some mistake. My grandfather has known Major Farringdon from a child; the Major's father was one of his most early friends, and my visit to the Major this morning was in the cause of humanity alone, as I know he is ever ready to impart his assistance to distress.

"A

“A poor officer's widow, deprived of sight, and struggling against poverty—”

He suffered her not to continue ;

———“When maidens sue,
Men give like Gods.”

“Will you impart to me,” interrupted he, “what you was about to unfold to Major Farrington? My means are ample ; and I am never more happy than when I can dispense those gifts with which fortune has blest me amongst those, who though worthy, the capricious power has utterly abandoned.”

“O sir,” said Charlotte. “I cannot ask of you, what my long acquaintance with the Major would render a pardonable freedom.”

“And why not, excellent young lady?” said the gentleman, his manners suddenly being changed into the most reverential respect,

“Indeed

"Indeed I promised, I was going to befriend the unhappy lady. Alas! I have not the means." Again her tears flowed, nor could she restrain them.

"Allow me, I beg of you, to accompany you; I have the means—I have just been with my banker."

"Suffer me first, sir, to enquire the name of him who thus kindly offers to be my escort?"

"Henry Denbigh."

"Good Heavens, sir! Be assured then I will not hesitate a moment. Your generous character is too well known and appreciated by her you now see before you, Charlotte Clarkson, the granddaughter of Captain Littlefame, who married your father's first cousin."

"My sweet cousin," said Henry, taking her hand, and tenderly, though respectfully pressing it to his lips, "what a happy *rencontre*."

I have ever maintained it, that there is
such

such a thing as love at first sight, though at the time we may not exactly know it is that tender passion. Whether, in a pre-existent state, souls before held communion with each other, or from whatever cause it proceeds, is undefinable. Personal attractions, though they may cause instant admiration, do not influence solely this peculiar and sweet emotion. No, mind meets mind through those optics of the soul, the eyes; and each thinks, I never saw one who pleased me so well, or to whom the dispensation of happiness seems so attached. Thus the image of Charlotte Clarkson, though Henry had seen many females infinitely more beautiful, was never effaced from his memory, since the time he first met her, about a year after his father's death, with her mother crossing South Audley-street. Neither did she ever behold so fine a pair of eyes, as those which turned their bright beams on her as she entered
the

the library of Major Farrington, nor a countenance so truly expressive of benevolence, and which seemed to be the index of a soul congenial with her own. And what she felt, as she suffered him to accompany her on her charitable errand, was a sensation totally different from what existed chiefly in a school girl's imagination, which persuaded the romantic mind of youth, that she loved him who had long become indifferent to her, and whose flinty and avaricious bosom had now rendered him odious to her. Neither did she feel for the captivating Henry that timid and painful sentiment, she had once experienced for the proud Farrington, and whose family consequence had destroyed it in its ripening, ere it was matured into love. But here, a sweet, an indescribable sentiment warmed her bosom and penetrated the recesses of her heart. Nor was the delighted Henry less enslaved; till sudden recollection cast a gloom over his

his mind, as he said, "I understand by Major Farrington that the rich and happy Mr. Dorimon is soon expected to lead Miss Clarkson to the altar."

"Never, sir," replied she, with firmness. "Indeed!" said Henry, while joyful hope beamed in his fine eyes.

The conversation, however, became general, till they reached the humble lodging of Mr. Elford's daughter, to whom the most munificent relief was administered in that elegant and delicate manner, which seemed to prove the donor the person most obliged. Henry politely and respectfully required of Mr. Elford to confer the favour on him to become his steward; for Henry perfectly recollected the good man in India, though he had never known him when in affluence and prosperity, but he was well known at Bengal for an unfortunate but honourable man.

Elford most joyfully now accepted the
proposal

proposal of Mr. Denbigh ; who taking leave of the afflicted parent and his interesting daughter, solicited the honour of attending Miss Clarkson home.

She readily consented, and caused her mother much surprise by her appearance. " I little expected," said Mrs. Clarkson, " to have seen you to-day, Charlotte ; at least not till the evening, at Lady Dorimon's."

" Mainma," said she, blushing indignantly at the very name of Dorimon, " will you have the goodness to give me the diamond sprig which Mr. Dorimon presented me with last week ?"

" What for ? Is Lady Dorimon going to have any particular party to-night !"

" No."

" Then I do not wish you to wear it till after you are Mrs. Dorimon."

" That I will never be," said Charlotte.

" Nonsense ! are you not ashamed to
go

go on thus before Mr. Denbigh;" said her mother.

"What's the matter!" said Captain Littlefame, who was talking apart at the window with Henry, and who was much grieved at this interruption, for he was insensibly bringing the conversation round to a subject which most interested him, the lovely Charlotte.

"Ah! little love quarrels I suppose," said Captain Littlefame, "which according to the old maxim, are the renewal of love."

"No, sir," said Charlotte, "my resolution is the consequence of thought and *consideration*. Let me speak to you, dear mother alone."

"No, I will not hear any such girlish, trifling nonsense."

"Then," said Charlotte, "as you oblige me to speak before Mr. Denbigh, I here solemnly repeat the vow I made this morning on my knees, that I never will be Mr. Dorimon's wife!"

"And

"And whence comes this caprice?" said the Captain, rather angrily.

"Sir," said Charlotte, "it is no caprice; it is a fixed and steady resolution; do not then look in anger upon me! Oh! my more than father, my dear kind mother, generosity and goodness guide the actions of you both; you have brought me up to comfort, as far as lies in my power, the afflicted soul, and hold in horror the idea of 'breaking the bruised reed;' and never will I wed a man, who, alive only to his own interest, and the amassment of wealth, can heap insult and barbarity on the aged head, and steel his own heart against the sufferings of the unfortunate. Dorimon is such a man; and such a man shall never be my husband. Disinherit me, leave me without a shilling, let me labour for my daily food, but condemn me not to be the wife of Dorimon."

She then explained the transactions of

the morning, and during her artless recital she cast on Henry the sweetest though most timid looks of admiration. He, ardent and impetuous, seized the present propitious moment, and offered himself and fortune, in presence of her parents, to the charming and interesting Charlotte.

This was an offer in every respect superior to that of Dorimon. But not wishing to appear unjust to him, or too eagerly hasty in their acceptance of Denbigh, though both the grandfather and the mother could not but feel truly partial to so amiable a suitor, whom they resolved should not sue in vain, they told him they would "*consider of it.*"

CHAP. X.

Farewell "THINKS I TO MYSELF."

I MUST not forget, amidst my making up marriages and breaking them off, to say a few words more to the Author of "*Thinks I to myself*," and then bid him, farewell. And if I prophecy aright—*seven* is a fatal number. I fear his volumes in *that* edition will be doomed to undergo the fate of some of mine, that is,—be laid on the shelf!

But think not, because I am candid enough to acknowledge that this, has been,

my lot, that I am now actuated by so low a principle as envy ; for while I *considered* the work, I always endeavoured to search out its merits, and applaud them as they deserved. But two or three passages yet obtrude themselves on my memory in the second volume, and as I now find myself drawing very near to a conclusion, I must say what I have to say upon them, and have done with that subject. For after the marriage of my hero and heroine is concluded upon, I shall not have room for an *Epilogue*, like my *thinking* predecessor ; which *Epilogue*, by the bye, is nearly as long as the whole drama.

What versatility of acting talents does such an *Epilogue* not require. Filled up as it is, with the virtues, vices, qualifications, &c. &c. of London and country servants. Then follow all the cries of London, the imitations of which would be enough to fatigue Bannister, Fawcett, Knight,

Knight, Liston, and all the whole set of comic mimics ever seen or heard on the stage (see pages 113 and 114 of vol. II.) All these are, however, excellent book-filling schemes; and as many of our present publications are aptly denominated *vehicles*, so this author not only made his work a *vehicle* for every thought which came uppermost, but also for London cries, servants's qualifications, long words, causelessly made use of, &c. and has thereby rendered it also a very useful *vehicle* to teach the whole art of *book-filling*!

I found myself, when I first *considered* this work, particularly amused at the character of the author's mother. At the beginning she is made out a very *good sort of woman*; in talents, and in her domestic sphere, somewhat resembling the good Mrs. Primrose, Mrs. Homespun, or any other such matter of fact female, presiding over a family, and recorded in

novel lore. But in the Epilogue, she is exalted to the skies. The author unable to 'utter half her praises,' gives her eulogy, in the words of a *great man*, and she is made equal to any of our most wonderful heroines of modern romance; not less, but rather more than *celestial*!

How could this *thoughtful* writer entertain so *sacriligious* an idea, as that he could possibly persuade us into a belief that there were ever any *clodpoles* in *Parliament*? Utterly impossible, my good sir!!!

In his prolix comments on servants, he seems to have borrowed an idea from the farce of *High Life below stairs*; where the servants are represented as all *herding* together in combination to deceive their master, and sending the honest servant to Coventry, who will not join in their fraud and deceit. This disagreeable truth is so constantly known and felt in all great families, that it is lost labour

labour to transmit it to posterity, through the medium of books. If it must be recorded, it amuses more on the stage than in the closet, nor was it worth while to pen so many pages about the heroes and heroines of the kitchen, as our *thinking* author has taken the trouble of doing.

For my part, I feel myself under the unavoidable necessity of saying more on this subject than I wish, but how, if I say nothing, can I possibly notice the greatest part of the second volume of "*Thinks I to myself!*" and if I do not say something of these latter pages, some of my readers, who may chance to be great admirers of the work in question, may think I have not properly considered it.

Yes, curious reader, I have considered it well; it was too much read at one time by every one, not for me to peruse it also. I must not say I was disappointed. No
 44 doubt

doubt but the Author has abilities far superior to my own ; but I will not be so servile as to say he has displayed them in this work. Our opinions have differed in many things, and they differ in his remarks on servants ; for in regard to the superiority of the country servants over those of London, I entirely disagree with him. Those of London are infinitely more clever, nor are they at all more, indeed I believe not so much, adepts in artifice as those in the country. This is I acknowledge a bold assertion ; but it is in vain now to look for rural innocence ; it is often feigned, and that renders the artifice still deeper.

I do not believe there is now a nurse in existence, who would stew a lady and her child almost to death, with *the hot warming pan*, in the way he describes his Emily to have been treated. However, it opens a fair field for him to fill up a

few pages with invectives against *coddlers*, *crammers*, &c. &c. This old nurse remembered Lord Kilgarnock's *chilblains*, then master Bobby, which it was very unlikely he should be so sadly afflicted with as he describes ; being, as he tells us in the first volume, a very sickly child, always kept quiet and warm, no doubt with his mother. Such children scarce ever have chilblains ; it is the robust child or the poor man's barefooted boy, that wades through snow, and is seldom at the fire till after dark, then incautiously puts his feet to that opposite element, and the next morning again encounters the inclemency of the weather, or the humid and penetrating thaw. But master Bobby, always cosseted, and almost tied to his mother's apron string, was not likely to be so violently afflicted with this disagreeable complaint, as he makes his nurse describe.

130 I'LL CONSIDER OF IT.

Lord Kilgarnock, in the conclusion, is happy with his Emily and his children. Why then, though only in fiction, punish poor Mrs. Fidget so severely?

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The Refusal.

DORIMON was much surprised when, as he repaired soon after the departure of Elford to the dressing-room of his mother, he found his Charlotte had not been there, and still more was he astonished, when he was told by the footman, that Miss Clarkson had gone out, seemingly in great haste.

"Well, *lark!*" says Lady Dorimon, "what a *fuss!* Why I suppose she *rettollected* *summut* or other as she wanted,

wanted, and is gone to buy it, while you was busy with the old man, as you was telling me about yesterday."

"Ah! he's an old bore," said young Dorimon; "as poor as a rat, G—d help him!" "Besides," said Lady Dorimon, "there's no use for him coming and plaguing you. You've engaged that tother rich young man, *hasn't* you?"

"To be sure; do you think I don't know what I am about?"

"Ay, ay," said her *polite* ladyship, "that's right; he's one as will bring *grists to our mill*, as the saying is. Why, *lawk!* it's no use to have any thing to do with a pack of poor folks. And now it's a good thing that you didn't make *serous* *purposals* to Miss Scrimp, for she *has* got only twelve thousand pounds down, and six more at her father's death; and the *badder* quality lady at Bath, has only *twenty* when you touch the capital; and
now

now here's the girl you ~~wikes~~ with thirty thousand!"

"I would marry my sweet Charlotte," said young Dorimon, "I believe, if she had not a sixpence; but I certainly love her better with thirty thousand pounds."

"I believe so," said Lady Dorimon, "else you'd be a great fool."

A note soon after arrived from Charlotte, saying that she would wait on Lady Dorimon in the evening, with her mother and grandfather, and begged her ladyship would not wait dinner. She added that she hoped Lady Dorimon would not have any other company that evening.

The important evening arrived; and none was there but Mrs. Clarkson and her family. When the servants were withdrawn after supper, Charlotte, collecting all her firmness, turned to Mr. Dorimon, whose attentions she had repulsed with much coldness all the evening, and handing to him the diamond sprig,
"Here

"Here, sir," said she, "is your costly present. Permit me to return it, and with it I beg to deliver myself and you from every engagement of future alliance."

"O Charlotte!" said Dorimon, in unaffected agony, unable to utter more, and turning pale.

"Why, *lawk!* Miss," said Lady Dorimon, "why, this is very odd behaviour! Why, its no better than downright jilting."

"My grand daughter," said Captain Littlefame, "assures me, that the mind of Mr. Dorimon is so very little in unison with her own, that she is confident she can never be happy with him. Therefore, as her mother and myself are resolved never to force her inclinations, we certainly, as she is so averse to it, do not wish the intended marriage between her and Mr. Dorimon should take place."

"And pray, Miss," said Lady Dorimon, "what's the matter with my son, now?"

now? You was mightily fond of him, when you *hadn't got no fortin*; and now, I suppose, as you've had a better offer, you *chuses* to jilt him."

Charlotte blushed, but recollecting herself, she said—"I am not the character your Ladyship is pleased to give to me. I act openly, and frankly. Mr. Dorimon's mind and principles are totally repugnant to mine; and I am convinced I could never be happy with him."

"Oh! say, my beloved Miss Clarkson," said Dorimon, "what have I done?"

"O Mr. Dorimon, ask your own heart and conscience, they will tell you how you insulted this morning, age, poverty, and misfortune, in the person of an anguished father seeking employment to support a daughter bereft of sight. To a man capable of such conduct, I have solemnly vowed never to unite my fate."

"O Charlotte," said Dorimon, "I will make every atonement in my power, I will

will send for him, fall at his feet, and intreat his pardon, to please you, and make you retract your cruel sentence."

"No, sir, not to please *me* should this be done. It should have been the willing, genuine feeling of the tender and compassionate heart. It is self alone now which actuate your contrition towards the man you have injured. Therefore, minds so ill paired as ours never ought to unite."

"Upon my word, Miss," said Sir Philip, who till now had been silent, "I must say I think you have no right to dictate to my son in the way of business. He has made a very prudent choice in the young man he has engaged, which will add to his riches and be all the better for yourselves."

"Ay, ay, said Lady Dorimon, "*its money as makes the mare to go!*"

"My grand-daughter," said Captain Littlefame, unable to contain his indignation,

tion, "has never been brought up with those selfish and narrow notions."

"Why, Captain, Captain," said Sir Philip, "its not likely that you, who have worn a red coat all your life, should know any thing about commerce."

"Ah!" said Lady Dorimon, aiming at wit, "and see what he has *got* by his red coat, or rather see what he has *lost*!" glancing significantly at the wooden leg and the armless sleeve of the good veteran.

"Hold, your tongue, Molly," said the Knight, who had now mounted *his* hobby horse; "I wish to have things amicably settled, if possible. And I am sure when Miss comes to *consider of it*, she'll own that she has been very much in the wrong, when I have pointed out to her grandpapa all the advantages of money to those who are in a commercial line. And I beg leave to ask the Captain, if money is not the chief commercial good?"

"I

"I do not pretend," said Captain Littlefame, "to know much about commerce; but I think the most heartfelt good is to dry up the tears of our suffering fellow-creatures."

"Ah!" said Sir Philip, "we have public charities for all that; and I hope my son will always have the good sense to know, that poverty is the greatest of all evils."

"Why, certainly," said young Dornimon, turning to Charlotte, "you must know, I am sure, Miss Clarkson, young as you are, that the greatest wealth in these fluctuating times is subject to a reverse; and we can only obtain strength and honour through the means of riches."

"I am perfectly well acquainted with your ideas and principles on that subject, sir," said Charlotte, emphatically.

Captain Littlefame looked on the young man with contempt, and inwardly gave thanks to Heaven, that his granddaughter

daughter had escaped uniting herself with such sordid minds.

"Did you ever, sir," said he to young Dorimon, "experience the most delightful of all pleasures?"

"An union," replied the young man, in a manner not devoid of grace, "with your grand-daughter, I should look upon as the most exquisite of all human felicity."

"No, sir, that is but selfish; make trial of a bliss yet more exquisite, and to which your heart seems at present a stranger; oblige the unhappy, succour the indigent, and then listen to the effusions of their gratitude."

"Who'd be the fool then?" said the elegant Lady Dorimon.

"Madam, I have done," said the Captain. "Why, sir," said young Dorimon, "as to gratitude, whether we give much or little, we are sure of meeting with unthankful beings."

"Ay,

"Ay, ay," said Sir Philip, "I know, and I should be very sorry if my son did not know too; the value of gold. As to a disinterested man, I tell you, Captain, there's no such thing."

"O sir," said Littlefame, "do not thus slander mankind: human nature is far from being perfect; but I hope it is not so black as you would now wish to paint it."

"No," said Charlotte, "nor do I believe that even the most ungrateful can forget they have a benefactor. But I do not think there is any being so repugnant to my heart as him, who, worshipping gold alone, never melts with compassion, and barbarously rejects the prayers of the unfortunate."

"O Charlotte," said young Dorimon, "forgive me; I will endeavour henceforth to be all you wish." But Charlotte had seen enough; she saw, in spite of Dorimon's love, and his unfeigned grief at losing

losing her, that still his ruling passion, the love of money; predominated; and that when an opportunity was given him of joining in the conversation, it was to extol wealth and plead its *important* cause, in the great advantages it brings to the short and uncertain life of poor, perishable man!

"No, sir," said she, "you have for ever torn asunder that chord which united our affections. But I part not in enmity; I shall ever wish you well, and sincerely pray that your heart may open itself to the feelings of compassion and generosity. You are young, Mr. Dorimon, like myself, and therefore, I hope you will endeavour to amend; and I am sure no self conquest can be greater, than that of eradicating such a vice from your bosom as avarice."

"*Lawk!* Miss *Sharlotter*," said Lady Dorimon, "you might as well set about preaching a *sarmunt* at once."

"Don't

"Don't be so hasty, Molly," said Sir Philip, "I think, after all, we might settle this matter amicably."

"Sir," said Mrs. Clarkson, "as my daughter said there is no enmity. But as I am resolved never to force her inclinations, and she has solemnly declared this day, that she never will have your son, I hope you will not urge her any farther on that subject."

Some farther conversation then took place, in which young Dorimon and the whole family evinced so much capidity and narrowness of mind, that both Mrs. Clarkson and her father could not by any means disapprove of the fixed resolution which their Charlotte had taken, even if she had never seen Mr. Denbigh, or been honoured with so advantageous an offer as he had made that morning.

The mind of the amiable Charlotte, relieved of the leaden weight which had oppressed it that morning, and full of the remembrance

remembrance of Henry's fine person, his elegance of manners, and the benevolent and generous disposition he had evinced sunk into a calm and sweet repose, as she prest her downy pillow, where visions of happiness flitted before her fancy, and bound her sleeping senses in rosy fetters.



CHAP. XIII.

Gamesters.

IT will naturally be imagined that when Henry Denbigh found himself swindled out of his gold repeating watch and near four hundred pounds, by an impostor, under the assumed name of the Bramin Nahred, that his pythagorean vow was easily broken; and this incident rather turned his mind against his favourite study, as he recollected what Mr. Meredith had told him at Madeira, relative to the strong likeness of a gentleman's
servant

servant in India to the Bramin, and he had no doubt, but that, when arrived in London, this fellow had become, by some means or other, acquainted with his weakness, and had put this scheme in practice, to profit by it.

But he soon banished the incident from his remembrance, and all his thoughts and wishes became centered in the lovely girl, whom he hoped soon to hail as his bride; and with a heart glowing with benevolence towards the whole human race, and a wish that every one might participate in his happiness, he not only purchased an elegant villa near Richmond, and placed Mr. Elford in a small adjoining house, with his grateful and now happy daughter; but anxious for the fate of poor Lady Warrington, and anxious to obtain for her her father's forgiveness, he lost no time in continuing the intreaties he had formerly made to Mr.

Mordaunt, to that effect, and with more energy than ever.

He had the satisfaction at length to soften him a little in her favour, at the last conference he had with him, but Mr. Mordaunt solemnly refused ever again to receive his daughter, if she did not consent to separate from her husband.

In vain Henry pleaded that, if she loved the man, it would be cruel to ask such a sacrifice, and only be half a forgiveness. "Hear, me, sir," said Mr. Mordaunt; "as to loving the man, I am convinced that Valencia, now detests him, as much as she before fancied she loved him; though, perhaps, it might not be easy to make her acknowledge it. She is a true daughter of the House of Mordaunt—her heart may break by accumulated affliction, but her lofty spirit will not be bowed down. As my daughter, she shall never know absolute want; neither

neither shall she ever know that it is her father who relieves her. She was my only child—a child I doted on, whose will was her indulgent father's law, and see how she has requited me."

" Pardon then, O pardon a fault, which, in so young a mind, took its rise, perhaps from that very indulgence."

" On this condition, sir, I may be brought to pardon, if she separates from Sir George ; but I will not give away her large fortune to be lost in one night at a gaming table."

Denbigh knew not how to blame the reasoning of Mr. Mordaunt. Alas ! it was but too true that Sir George Warrington was a most incorrigible gamester. Henry, at length, however, went by the father's permission to wait on Lady Warrington, and make proposals to her of a separation from her husband, when she would again be allowed to reside, as usual, under her father's roof.

He found her elegantly dressed, and waiting as if to receive company, in a superbly lighted apartment. But oh! how altered was Valencia from what she was when Henry first knew her. An arrogant and bold freedom of manner had taken place of the becoming pride and elegant ease for which Mr. Mordaunt's daughter was once conspicuous. Her yet brilliant eyes sparkled it is true, but on her brow sat care and anxiety.

"To what am I to attribute the favour of this visit? Mr. Denbigh," said she, "for I know you do not gamble, and to-night is one of my grand faro nights. Come, perhaps you are grown a more reasonable being than you was, and you will stay and play with us, and make a bold venture."

Henry shook his head and was about to unfold his mission, when Sir George entered, saying, after a slight inclination of his head to Henry, "I have put off
above

above half of the party that were coming to-night ; here are the names on this card, and you must send to put off the remainder. Come, Val. give me the five hundred pounds we swept away last night."

" I will not," replied she.

" You will, though, madam," said Sir George. " Why, you little fool ! with that I shall win more than five thousand this night, I hope, of that stupid block-head, Sir Hubert Wentworth." Henry was shocked to see the eager look of Lady Warrington, and saw with sad regret, how deeply was rooted in her bosom the baneful spirit of gaming.

" We are professed gamesters, sir," said Sir George to Henry ; " we make no secret of it. We win all we can in the fair way of play. Will you accompany me, sir, to-night to B—s? There is good company expected."

" Excuse me, sir," said Henry, now thinking he had a fair opportunity of

speaking to Lady Warrington, on the errand he came upon ; she entered with the pocket book, and as she gave it to her husband she trembled, and her cheek turned pale, seemingly with involuntary terror. But collecting herself, she said, " Mark me, George, if you are not successful this night, and lose this, as you have often done by other sums, every shilling, never see my face again."

Sir George gave a splenetic smile. " Well, sir," said he, casting a look at the handsome figure and fine countenance of Henry, " if you please, sir, we will walk together. I presume you are going, as you are standing with your hat and cane in your hand." Henry bowed in the affirmative.

" Let me recollect," added Sir George, " you was formerly a suitor to my wife, I believe."

" And what, sir, if he was?" said Valencia, " he never was an accepted one."

And

And then, with her usual haughty independence, she requested Mr. Denbigh to stay and keep her company.

Denbigh, however, had too much good sense to accept of an invitation, where he could see the husband looked on him with a jealous eye, and hastily taking his leave he found himself obliged to put off his conference with Lady Warrington till a more favourable opportunity.

As he walked homewards, he resolved, if possible, to save the silly and good-natured Sir Hubert Wentworth from ruin. He was one of Henry's friends, possessed of a large estate, and by having been two evenings tolerably successful at a subscription house in the neighbourhood of St. James's, was beginning to imbibe a love for play.

Henry wiled away the time, till he thought the different parties might be firmly seated at the tables; he then put a few notes of value in his pocket-book, and sallied forth to the gaming house.

He beheld the devoted Sir Hubert seated at the same table with the gambling Sir George, as his antagonist. Sir George's partner was a genteel looking man, whom Henry felt certain he had seen before ; but when or where, he could not, in the confusion of his present ideas, recollect ; but the pensive cast of his eye, and his complexion, struck him as being very familiar to him.

Enveloped in a furred great coat, which almost hid the under part of his face, stood at some distance in rather a remote part of the room, a well known police officer, and with him a little sharp-faced man, whose eager, ferret eyes were fixed on the party which occupied Sir George Warrington's table.

Henry retired to a convenient distance. He found that Sir George, with the usual frauds practised on young pigeons intended to be plucked, had suffered Sir Hubert to win as much as three hundred pounds.

A

A gambling Lord stepped up, and betted an hundred pounds on the next rubber; they cut the cards—Sir George Warrington lost!

He now desperately staked his last hundred—same ill luck; he made a sign to his partner which was not lost on Henry, and the luck of Sir Hubert Wentworth appeared to be taking a turn. Henry sent a person to tell Sir Hubert, that some one wished to speak to him for a few minutes, on business of the utmost importance.

“You will not stay long, sir,” said the partner of Sir George Warrington. “Here,” added he, laying down his watch, “I will allow you, by my repeater, ten minutes.”

“A good motion,” said Sir George and the partner of Sir Hubert, and laid their watches on the table, as the peculiar music of Henry’s repeater sounded eleven.

“What a sweet toned repeater!” said two or three in the room.

"By Heaven, it is mine!" said Henry.

"Mr. L———, take that fellow; I know him now. I see it is the same, notwithstanding the alteration in his dress, who robbed me some time ago of that watch in the disguise of a Bramin."

"I'll Bramin him," said the little man; "let me stand before him, and see if he can recollect Robert March!" A palid hue spread itself over the countenance of the wretched Jenkins at the sight of this little man. He never thought of the watch or any thing else—he was enraptured at the vision before him, whose keen eye, like that of the basilisk, appeared threatening to destroy him.

Henry, attended by Mr. L———, took up the watch and said, "Now, sir, he pleased to inform me how this came into your possession?"

"O sir, I—I— Oh! take it, sir, it is your's. And oh! spare me the exposure
of

of a public trial, and an ignominious death."

"Behold, Sir George," said Henry, "the wretches with whom you associate. However, Mr. L——, if this business can be settled without any process of law, I should be happy."

"Take him then in custody on my account," said Mr. March; "he is a swindler, and to my knowledge has been guilty of forgery." Henry, however, wished, as much as possible to avoid having his name appear in a public prosecution, and was also fearful of implicating the husband of Valencia as an associate of the wretch before him.

"Is there no possibility of evading a public exposure, Mr. March," said Henry. "Captain Hamilton just now said, he was willing to make every restitution in his power."

"Captain Hamilton!" said Mr. March, "Thomas Jenkins, the confidential valet

of the late Mr. Alborough. His best benefactor's will, the excellent Colonel Elford's, he forged, and deprived the worthy younger brother, Captain Elford, of his right! Can he ever make restitution to him? Can any repentance of such a wretch compensate for the injury he inflicted on that excellent man?"

"Elford," said Henry; "what him of that name who lately came from India in distress?"

"Yes," said Mr. March: "and thank Heaven, that he is come from India, and that it is in my power, as far as fortune goes, to restore to him what that wretch deprived him of."

Henry happened to cast a look towards the seat which Sir George just occupied, and found it vacant; when suddenly the report of a pistol reached their ears from one of the passages. All ran mechanically to the door, and found the wretched Sir George Warrington had placed a
pistol

pistol in his mouth, and shot himself through the head in a most horrible manner. All was now a scene of horror, tumult, croud, and confusion, in the midst of which Jenkins contrived to effect his escape.

Alas! poor Valencia! thy unfortunate husband lost every remaining shilling he was worth, and never more indeed *will see thy face again?*



CHAP. XIV.

"Heaven is wronged when virtue feels despair."

Peacock's Philosophy of Melancholy.

HOW different are the motives of different men which prompt them sometimes to the commission of the same act. Thus the excellent Henry Denbigh never thought that he too had been guilty of forgery; nor did conscience strike at all at his bosom, when he found Jenkins accused of that crime by Mr. March.

That little, indefatigable man now lost no time in introducing himself to Mr. Elford, and possessed of the original will
of.

of his brother, the Colonel, who was a man of property, and which will Mr. March had put into the hands of a respectable lawyer of Clement's Inn. He now, accompanied by that lawyer, presented himself at the cottage of Mr. Elford, near Richmond, and put him in undisputed possession of that property, which belonged to him, but which had been by him who had unlawfully possessed himself of it, bequeathed to Mr. March, who only left himself the scanty pittance he had procured in America, by unwearied application to business..

He shewed also the forged will to Mr. Elford; "Confess now, sir," said he, "even when you see the two writings together, that it is totally impossible to discern which is which?"

"No, indeed," said Mr. Elford, "and it was that nice similarity which rendered it totally out of my power to make any plea. I felt so certain that this would be
sworn.

sworn to as my poor brother's own hand-writing, and no other will could be found, and, therefore, I felt at times, almost sure myself that my eyes must have deceived me in that one which my brother had once given me to read, or that he had, though I could not imagine why, altered it. You know not, I believe, what afterwards followed; for Mr. Morris, whose clerk, I very well remember, you then was, after he became the heir to my brother's wealth, immediately quitted India.

“That day, just before he embarked, he paid me the trifling bequest left me by my brother, and I requested once more to look at the will which he had with him: I asked the widow Mackensie, who had lately married Cameron, my quartermaster, and of whom Mrs. Elford, my sister-in-law, was extremely fond, when she was a little girl, if she really thought that was my brother's hand-writing. “Assuredly, sir,” said she; “what makes you

you doubt it?" Mr. Morris seemed to be flustered and rather angry. However, he soon took his leave, and I, having some little business to settle with my quartermaster, asked his wife to bring him and take supper with me.

"The next morning our regiment went into action. It was a memorable day, a day of honourable renown in India, to all but me, for there the sun of my military glory set for ever !

"The commander of the regiment was not my friend, but while I did my duty, he dared not be my avowed enemy. Knowing myself to be a beggar, with nothing upon earth to subsist upon but my military pay, a stupidity of grief came over me, for I had just received accounts that my poor girl had become a widow. I never had felt affected before in the manner I then was. The division I commanded was all in confusion, awaiting the orders I neglected to give them,

or

or acting at random; for I knew not what I said or did. Our army was victorious, but I had quitted my post, I know not how or why. I returned the next day to a sense of my sad situation, like the wretch who recovers from intoxication or from the effects of a powerful opiate; nor had I long felt the conviction of my ill behaviour in the field, when the adjutant came to put me under arrest, and I was tried shortly after for cowardice, and dismissed the service. Oh! how the kind major and my brother officers tried to save me; so did the gallant general who headed our armies, and others of high respectability. But my commanding officer was inveterate, my own conduct appeared infamous, though caused by the stupidity of grief, and I was adjudged guilty. This was the severest blow of all! Wounded honour, how much more keen are thy pangs than any which poverty can inflict! A
violent

violent illness, from which I could hardly be said ever to have recovered, was the result of the severe agitations of my mind. It left me in a calm state of quiet, which had, however, more in it of despair than resignation.

My daughter's blindness awakened my energies, and hurried me to England; for the little employment I obtained in India, was scarce sufficient for my own support. I have for that dear daughter's sake, endured the insolent taunts of purse-swollen pride; but I have met with an angel in the person of Mr. Denbigh, whose steward I am now become, and whose faithful steward I am determined to remain without fee or reward. Half of my fortune, generous, honest man, is yours. "No, sir," said March, "it is too unjustly acquired, and gratitude to my benefactor, obliged me, too long, to *conceal* that injustice for me to partake of it."

"But

“But you cannot prevent my making over a deed of gift to you, to put you in possession of the half of what I possess,” said Elford, “which I shall immediately do, in presence of this gentleman.”

And now I must beg to leave them at the musty business of drawing up of papers, &c. &c. and transport my readers to India, for a few minutes, in order to let them into Mr. Morris's story, and the share Mrs. Cameron and her brother had in the fraud he practised.

Yet, perhaps, my readers may some of them chuse to skip the narration, as unessential to the history. If they do, I cannot help it; but I know when I peruse a book, if I skip and not properly *consider* every page, however tedious or stupid, I lose half the pleasure, and if I peep at the conclusion, and know how the story will end, I lose the *whole*. Yet I have watched some ladies reading, who affect to be
charmed

charmed with a popular work, while ten chances to one, they have skipped over the most interesting parts; for I have seen them turn two or three leaves at a time, and peep at the three or four last pages, the moment they got hold of the last volume.

No man was more respected in India than Lawyer Morris, and he was constantly designated by the title of the *honest lawyer*. The worst of it was, he doted on money, was very covetous, and "covetousness is next to the sin of witchcraft." But who, argued his friends, are perfect?

The widow of a poor lawyer, of the name of March, was left in great distress, struggling for three or four years against sickness and poverty. Out of four of her children, she lost three, one after the other, in the space of two months, of a malignant fever. Robert, her eldest child, a poor, sickly looking little being, she gave up for lost, as soon as ever the disorder

order attacked him, but contrary to her expectations he recovered, and Mr. Morris, who had known her husband in the way of his profession, and hearing of her great distress, his close heart expanded and melted with compassion. He paid her little debts, took her home to be his house-keeper, and articted the boy to himself as a clerk. The shrewd quickness of the little urchin, the grateful diligence with which he performed every service his benefactor required of him, won his heart, and bound his affections so firmly to the lad; that he promised, in his own mind, to make him his heir, as he was himself a batchelor and had no relations living.

Robert March soon became an orphan, for his mother's delicate health carried her off in a very short time after she became an inmate in the house of Mr. Morris.

At the time of Colonel Elford's death,
March

March was a young man, and the head clerk in Mr. Morris's office, and possessing his unbounded confidence. In the beginning of this work, it was observed, that when Mrs. Cameron was a little girl, the good Colonel Elford's lady had done her the honour of educating her herself, and she always took particular notice of her and her brother Thomas. Mrs. Elford did not live long after the regiment returned to England; and about the time that Mrs. Mackensie went out to India as the wife of an ensign, Lieutenant Colonel Elford had been raised to the rank of full Colonel, and went out to India again, accompanied by a younger brother, who was a Captain in that regiment which the Colonel commanded.

He happened to say one day to Morris, " If I had no heirs, I would leave all my fortune to you; you are such an honest fellow. However, if Arthur, my brother, should not marry, and his daughter should
happen

happen to die, I'll depute you his heir, if you should outlive them."

Now we are all mighty honest till we are found out, or temptation assail us; and whether Morris was as honest as he appeared to be, or how it was cannot be determined, because dead men tell no tales, either of themselves or other people. Certain it is, that, from that time, he could never be easy till he got hold of the Colonel's cash, and he accordingly resolved, at all events, to be—a villain!

He had found out, by some means or another, that the valet de chambre of Mr. Alborough could imitate any hand-writing in India. Mrs. Cameron, during the Colonel's last illness, was extremely kind and attentive. She had free egress to all the drawers, escrutoires, cabinets, &c. &c. and she could easily dispossess one will and pop another in it's place; and Jenkins had copied it so fairly, it was impossible to find out the difference of
the

the hand-writing. And Morris had bound over the brother and sister to secrecy, with a sum of three hundred pounds each.

Poor March saw that all was not going on right; but what could he do? Could he bring to condign punishment, which inevitably must be the consequence, should the forgery be discovered, the man to whom he owed so much, who was more to him than a father?

Morris also knew that March was a man of integrity and well principled; and he was afraid to place entire confidence in him in this nefarious business; but giving him one day a sealed paper, he said to him, "Go where there is a fire, and destroy that paper. Stop by it till you see it consumed to ashes."

It was not curiosity alone, which
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prompted March, as soon as he was alone, to examine the contents of this paper; and he found it to be the original will of Colonel Elford. "Ah!" said he to himself, "I will not destroy this. There is no telling how the wonder-working means of Providence may yet bring about the just claims of the injured. He wakes for the oppressed, when mortals drowsy eyes are blind to every ray of hope. Oh! how right was I to '*consider of it*,' before I rashly was obedient to the behest of my patron! I will never be the ungrateful monster to hurt him, my kind benefactor; but who knows what time may bring about?"

He threw some papers in the fire, of no consequence, and safely placed the will of Colonel Elford under lock and key in his own apartment; and after this transaction

transaction, Morris finally quitted India, and set sail, with his adopted heir to England.

March met Jenkins, just as he was going on board. "Ah! traitor," said he, "the gallows groans for you. Beware of me—when we meet again, it may prove fatal to you."

Guilt is easily dismayed. Jenkins, the next time he saw his sister, which was but a few hours after, said to her, "Beware the Ides of *March*," and then he briefly related to her what the clerk of Mr. Morris had uttered.

She shuddered as a gloomy idea shot across her mind, which, however, she thought would point out a means of ensuring her safety. She was engaged to sup with Captain Elford, as before related, that evening. She provided herself with

a strong narcotic powder, to infuse into his wine, the opiate powers of which were of that nature which would have been enough to have made another man sleep to wake no more. His excellent constitution, from the temperate life he had always observed, triumphed over it, but it rendered his services the next day useless in the field of honour, and he felt its baneful effects for many years.

During the arrest of Captain Elford, Mrs. Cameron departed for England, by no means increased in beauty; for her eyes, which before had a wildness in them, which was far from agreeable, had acquired a look of horror, since her attempt on the intellects of Captain Elford, which evinced a mind replete with all the terrors of guilt.

This terror was increased after her brother's

brother's arrival in England; who falling in one evening at a noted gaming-house with an associate, who like himself lived on his wits, he was laughing at the folly of repentance, and the worse folly of restitution; and said he met across the Atlantic a foolish fellow of the name of March, who was lately left heir to a good fortune, but who was coming to England, to restore it to its right owners.

This was no laughing matter to Jenkins; for he had no reason to doubt the truth of what his friend had told him.

Mr. Morris, with his ill got wealth, had departed for America, where he lived but a short time, a prey to the bitterest remorse, and never tasted comfort or ease. He bequeathed all his fortune to Robert March, who hastened to England with

the original will of Colonel Elford bound to his body, that in case of shipwreck, he might, if possible, be able to preserve it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

A Melange.

THE grief of Lady Warrington, on the fatal news of her husband's premature death, was of that poignant kind, which might naturally be expected from an ardent disposition, unused to sorrow, and ever impatient of disappointment or distress. Now deprived for ever of an husband, who, notwithstanding his many faults, could, at this mournful hour, be

only remembered by her, as her imagination had been accustomed to picture him when first he won her virgin heart.

At this period of bitter affliction, the ever-amiable Charlotte shewed herself a friend indeed ! She never quitted the young widow ; and though she had modestly given her consent to render Henry Denbigh happy, by bestowing on him her hand, she solemnly declared, that till she saw her friend in some measure comforted, and quite tranquil, she was resolved to share her sorrows, nor plight her faith to him before the altar, who had so easily won her heart.

All her persuasions and entreaties, with those of her amiable and excellent lover, were now exerted, to move Mr. Mordaunt to forgive the youthful wanderer, his daughter, and take her back to
his

his heart and home: he, at first, faintly said, he would "*consider of it.*"—The supPLICATOR still persevered; and the procrastinating sentence above, quoted became fainter and fainter, the three succeeding times of their application: at length it was drowned in the tears of parental affection, and the first sentence he afterwards articulated was, "Tell her then," and he affectionately took his little favourite, as he always called Charlotte, by the hand, "Tell her, that female friendship, personified in this sweet form, has conquered, and my arms and heart shall be opened to receive the sufferer."

The grief that is turbulent seldom sinks deep. Valencia again in the house of her father, now cordially forgiven both by him and her aunt, experiencing every comfort of life, elegance, and the most

delicate and unremitting attention from all her friends, soon recovered her bloom, with her tranquillity; and the beautiful widow again became, as usual, the object of universal, though transient admiration.

When Jenkins escaped through the crowd, and confusion caused by the dreadful suicide committed by Sir George Warrington, he fled to his lodgings for one moment, just to take a last farewell of his sister, and also to furnish himself with a few valuables in cash and jewels, which he yet possessed. He learned, to his unspeakable sorrow, that Mrs. Brown had not been home, since she went out in the morning.

He jumped into an hackney-coach, and driving to Wych-street, enquired hastily for the fortuneteller, but found she had been taken by the officers of the police,
and

and was in a lock-up-house in the neighbourhood.

The reader will recollect, that is, if he or she has any memory, or have not skipped the passage, that Mr. March happened to take a lodging in the very same house with Mrs. Cameron, and where she passed by the name of Mademoiselle Lemornant: he chanced to meet her one day on the stairs, leading to her apartment, and he instantly recognized her, notwithstanding her disguise. At the sight of him, for his countenance was of that peculiar kind, that no one having once seen it could forget it, she fell down in a fainting fit.

Mr. March knew not the extent of Mrs. Cameron's guilt, but her present way of life assured him all could not be very correct on her part; and he hoped to gain, through her, some tid-

ings of her brother. He raised her up, brought her to herself, and took her into his apartment.

He made her the most kind and accommodating promises, if she would inform him where he might find her brother. For a long time she preserved an obstinate silence, till the lock-up-house, and promise of speedy liberty, made her tell him, that her brother would be in the evening, at B——'s gaming-house.

It is impossible to follow the wretched Jenkins through the scenes of his iniquitous life. Valencia, on the night after her wedding in Scotland, with Sir George Warrington, when the wine went briskly round, made Captain Hamilton, as Jenkins called himself, and the baronet also, laugh heartily at the *Hindoo* creed of the *Christian* Henry Denbigh.

Jenkins

Jenkins rejoiced at this intelligence; he had been accustomed to personate the Bramin Nahred, to please the whimsical Alborough, his master; and he well knew that Nahred, whose tragical death was often the topic of discourse, was the only Bramin in the vicinity to that situation in India, which Mr. Denbigh and his father both occupied, who spoke the English language with ease and fluency.

He stationed himself continually on watch at the Hindostanee coffee-house, and made himself perfectly acquainted with the person of Henry, while he listened to him, and often found out how he was portioning out his time. He there found out the day when some young men, from the east, were to dine together; and he heard Henry say he should pass the evening in one of the rooms

rooms at the coffee-house; the other young gentlemen all repaired to the theatre.

Jenkins, by some chemical preparation, made the lights burn dim, and played, for a short time, a faint phosphoric blaze over his own head; then after having duped the enthusiastic Henry of his watch and valuable pocket-book, he stole softly out, slipped off his Bramin's disguise in one of the passages, walked boldly into the street, and repaired quietly home.

Far different did he feel, and little quiet did he dare to maintain, on that night in which Mr. March had detected him at the gaming-table. Absolute and hasty flight he knew was now become imperiously requisite to insure his life. In different lodgings, under different disguises, and adopting various names, he
concealed

concealed himself for some days, in the neighbourhoods of Lime-house, Wapping, and Horslydown, when a vessel departing for New South Wales, he voluntarily transported himself to that country, for the residue of his life. And his sister, from various circumstances proved against her on her trial, was, by the mercy of the law, sentenced to the same place for seven years.

No doubt the brother and sister will again unexpectedly meet, and be equally surprised at the sight of each other, as they were in India ; and we hope Mr. Jenkins like the renowned Barrington, will make a good use of those shining abilities which he possessed from all bounteous nature.

Young Dorimon, notwithstanding his love of money, which almost absorbed
every

every other, might be said to experience real grief at the loss of his Charlotte. But at length he comforted himself in part, by thinking, that as to the cause of her refusal of him, he had acted conformable to his own interest. Would my beneficence, thought he to himself, to that old man have indemnified me for the sacrifices I must have made to it? My first duty is to build up, with care, the valuable edifice of wealth.

Yet, with this most repellant quality in a young man, this inordinate love of money, Dorimon was nevertheless esteemed and honoured; because he appeared to have no vices, nor to indulge in prodigal pleasures; the reason was this; they were attended with too much expence. He had been fond of fashion and gaiety; but even they lost their attractions

tractions before the more intrinsic value of gold.

A great coolness and distance had now taken place between Lady Dorimon's and Mrs. Clarkson's families.

Lady Dorimon thought Charlotte had used her son extremely ill; and Charlotte certainly wished to avoid, as much as possible, the society of a young man, with whom she was so near on the point of marriage; they, therefore, now seldom met but in crowded parties; where Major Farrington looked almost like a simpleton; and he, who used to be the very elegant speaker, now said but little, and that little was not always to the purpose.

His thoughts continually centered in one

one reflection, that if the relation of Mr. Denbigh, who was the

"Very glass of fashion,

"The observed of all observers,"

had blest him, by taking the title of his wife, if she had been hailed by the name of Mrs. Farrington, it would not have reflected much disgrace on him, though *she was* the daughter of a man-milliner! Ah, Major! you took too much time to "*consider of it!*"

As to Lady Dorimon, she cried, "*Lawk!* its well that rich nabob relation left *um* so much, or they'd all have been as poor as rats by this time, with their extravagant highflying notions; and *a'ter* all, why they *comed* but from the very *drugs* of the people; for, *lawk!* what's a mau-millender? It seems, somehow,

how, such a *wiffeting* kind of a trade, like!"

But it was in vain this *titled* lady sought to degrade Miss Clarkson. She was a general favourite wherever she visited; her affable manners, as well as her style of dress, were universally copied, and her acquaintance appreciated, even by some of the very first classes of polite society.

Though, certainly, truth compels us to acknowledge, that several among her female acquaintance did not quite like her, for being so engaging in her person, so captivating in her manners, and so sensible, without any pretension of being so; for her sense was too sterling to make her ever eager of displaying it much in company; therefore, it was impossible for any one to say that she had an high opinion of herself; for she
always

always let those arrogant and self-conceited ladies, who are frequently misnamed sensible women, talk away as much as they pleased, and would also, from politeness, pay that attention to them, which was highly flattering to their weak minds; while, with her mirthful and lively sallies, she would amuse those agreeable unenvious girls, whom she was sometimes fortunate enough to meet with; and as few things had it in their power to make her melancholy, as far as concerned herself, she was beloved by far the greatest part of her female associates; but what particularly gained her their suffrages was, that happy art she possessed, and which art was devoid of all artifice, in seeming to limit her abilities to her company; while this without any duplicity, came spontaneous from her kind heart and amiable disposition; which

which made her reject the wish of being regarded superior to any of her female companions : and only in the eyes of her beloved Henry did she wish to be

“ A thousand times more fair,

“ More amiable, wise, and lovely,”

than she really was ; and he was not blind to that sweet amiability, which rendered her every day more dear to his heart, and which consisted in unassuming retreat from public notice and applause, which gave, with smiling and unaffected good humour, the opportunity to every one, of shining in their turn, and avoided carefully every thing which might make another feel their own inferiority.

Mr. Dorimon's natural love of wealth will, no doubt, in the end comfort him for the loss of the valuable pearl, which,

“ like

“ like

“like the base Judean, he threw away;” and Miss Scrimp’s father promising to augment her fortune, he may, perhaps, be brought to forget the lovely Charlotte.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Events.

WHEN once true love has taken place in the heart, and is founded on tender and grateful esteem, the pure mind seeks not to conceal its emotions. The father of Henry Denbigh had, as Charlotte thought, rendered the latter days of her grandfather rich and happy ;
and

and while she indulged that thought, and had daily demonstration of the generosity of her Henry, not only to her own family, but to many others, whose worth and distresses were always readily accepted pleas before him, she therefore combatted not against her feelings, nor sought to disguise them; but modest with tenderness, she gloried in her love for her Henry; and if his vanity was flattered by such a distinction, who could impute it to him as a fault, when he named himself the day, in full certainty of not meeting with a refusal from her, whose beloved society was to embellish all his future hours.

The good clergyman, who had christened Charlotte, waited on Mrs. Clarkson, and begged to have the honour of tying the nuptial knot. This condescending

scending request was received with thankful acceptance; for it was now the Dean of P—— who made it.

On the day that Mr. Denbigh led his blooming and blushing bride to the altar of St. George's, Hanover Square; a place where more couples are joined in one month, I believe, than there are days in the year;—two doughty disappointed swains set off, different roads, post for the country.

In the first place, in an hired post chaise and four, rattled off from Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, Major Farrington, who had been so long *considering* about the disgrace which might attend him if he had married a tradesman's daughter; but would, at that moment, have been glad to have given up all his grand armorial bearings, all the pride

of ancestry, and all the wealth he had in the world, to be in the happy Henry Denbigh's place.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife,” says the commandment. Major Farrington feared no man, but he feared his God! He felt the force of the above commandment; and he felt too that he durst not disobey it. Major Farrington was a man of honour; he was more; he was, though a man of fashion, a religious man! and with all his pride he knew he was but a worm, a mere atom, before that Power, whom he feared to offend.

His present journey was to Sussex, to purchase an estate which he found was to be sold there, and to which he meant to retire for the remainder of his days; and, if possible, never see Mrs. Denbigh

Denbigh more. If Major Farrington had not so often said to himself, "*I'll consider of it,*" when he half determined to go and ask the hand of her he fondly loved; and if he had not in reality so long *considered* about it, there *was* a time when he would not have been refused.

Mark the difference of men's pursuits, and their different principles!

Dorimon had no such noble and refined ideas working in his bosom; it is true,

"Some natural tears he dropt,

"But *wiped* them soon!"

And he set off, in the Exeter mail-coach, to pay another visit to his rich miserly uncle, and endeavoured to solace

K 2

himself

himself with the contemplation of those riches, which he expected he would leave him, and find ample amends for the loss of his once loved Charlotte, in the plenitude of his well-loaded coffers.

From this uncle he heard lessons which were not thrown away, and which were only a repetition of those which had before been deeply imprinted on his mind and memory. The old miser depicted to him the present times as terrific, the future yet more so; charging him to attach himself solely to the rich, and despise and shun all who were poor or extravagant; remarking also, how much he ought to bless himself, for the escape he had been lucky enough to make, in not marrying an expensive, thoughtless young hussey, who would throw away
more

more money in a week than he could be a year in accumulating. "No, no," he would add, "Marry that Miss Serimp, my good fellow, if you must marry: the plainness of her person will be your security: handsome women are always extravagant, and generally treacherous. Never mind if your wife is a female monster, so as she has but plenty of gold!"

Dorimon carefully stored up these lessons in his breast, and degraded himself by his unbounded thirst after riches; which degradation, at his time of life, and possessed, as he was, of an handsome person, exposed him to just and bitter raillery; for universal opinion and individual censure are often found to be judicious, while they strike at those vices which are not punishable by the

laws, and they eternise the shame of covetousness, from generation to generation.

And now, quitting this most detestable of all characters, an avaricious *young* man, I am sorry to be obliged to relate the heavy cloud of grief which hung over the bridal happiness of the interesting Charlotte! Her dear grandfather, Captain Littlefame, after a short illness, attended with but little pain, and his mind comforted with the blessings of a quiet conscience, and a sure trust in Heavenly mercy, as if he had just lived long enough to see the dearest wish of his heart fulfilled, his dear daughter's child, well provided for, and enjoying every earthly happiness, he breathed his last gentle sigh in the arms of the affectionate Mrs. Clarkson, whom he blessed with

with his dying breath, for her unremitting kindness and attention to her aged father.

The grief of the mother and daughter knew no bounds; and scarce was it in the power of even the sorrowing Henry to comfort his lovely bride; though she could not but gratefully appreciate his unwearied acts of tender affection, and delicately attentive goodness.

After the funeral obsequies were over, and which were performed with all the mournful pomp of warlike honour, and the last volley had fired over the grave of one of Britain's bravest soldiers, Mrs. Denbigh and her mother accompanied, by the amiable and accomplished Henry, set off for Denbigh Lodge, his seat near Richmond, where Mr. Elford and his

interesting daughter received them with tender gratitude, and a welcome the most sincere, though checked in the rapturous flow, which mounted to their lips, from their gratified hearts; for joy, they well knew, could not yet be received in the bosoms of the worthy trio that now arrived at the lodge, as welcome guests.

Though the charming Mrs. Denbigh and her excellent-hearted mother could not avoid nourishing their regret for a parent so truly estimable; yet they borrowed from religious resignation all the fortitude of courageous minds, and bowed to the will of that beneficent Power, who had taken a faithful servant to himself.

They were called upon to quit their solitude sooner than they had intended.

The

The father of Mr. Meredith had died in Madeira, and his son had just arrived in England.

Henry immediately departed for London, to welcome his earliest and dearest friend; but unable to bear the deprivation of his Charlotte's society, he prevailed on her and her mother to accompany him to Portman Square; hoping that the varied scenes of the gay metropolis might afford, in some measure, the means of assuaging the grief they still laboured under.

Here, one morning, in the absence of Henry, the good-natured Mr. Meredith informed Mrs. Clarkson, now that the noble-minded Captain Littlefame was no more, of the generous fraud of her worthy son-in-law, to put him in the possession of thirty thousand pounds.

Mrs. Clarkson informed her daughter, who was charmed with his beneficence, but not surprised; for she saw every day in her beloved husband continual instances of the delicate liberality of his disposition, and some new trait of genuine goodness to excite her admiration: and though Henry was, at first, rather displeased at his friend, for thus betraying him, the tender caresses he received from his Charlotte, as a punishment for his generous artifice, amply repaid him, and easily obtained the pardon of Meredith, who, when reproached by Henry for having broken his oath, said, "Recollect, my dear Denbigh, I swore most solemnly, never to let your forgery be discovered to Captain Littlefame! And you ought to be much obliged to me for telling your lady, that you performed this generous deed of yourself alone ;

alone; that when she is inclined to be angry with you, she may think of that, and forgive you every thing else, for that beneficent action."

CONCLUSION.

THE Dowager Countess of C ——— and O ———, gave some little time ago a party, who were amused with what was said to be a compleat *Olla Podrida*; and which consisted of a little of-every thing, such as musick, singing, dancing, *ventroloquism*, &c, &c. Now to compare *little* beings

beings with *great*, though I have here no *ventroloquist* ; yet I cannot help thinking but what I have shewn myself, in this work, not unlike the aforesaid Countess, and I have, like her ladyship, with the most good natured intentions in the world, endeavoured to suit all tastes. The variety of my characters form a very motley group, and I hope the disposal of them has not, nor will not displease any of my readers.

To form the principal characters in my drama, I have taken from the army an old wooden legged Captain, and a proud, but accomplished Major. My other *Dramatis Personæ*, are a female, ambitious of, and venerating authorship ; her daughter whose amiable simplicity united with good sense develope its principles more fixed as years increase, to form her character.

but

but who is, by no means—a goddess or an Angel !

An amiable and generous young man from the East, though born and half educated in England, partly Bramin, partly Christian, gay, sprightly, and truly liberal ! a proud gambling beauty and her desperate husband, a City Knight and his lady ; an old and young miser, with two swindlers, compleat the set of my chief characters.

These said characters I have disposed of as I thought most natural. I have an elopement to Scotland, its consequences, and a suicide. My two swindlers are transported ; my hero and heroine married ; and my old Captain, worn down with age and more by hard service, quietly laid under the turf, and the soldiers

dier's honourable grave bedewed with the tear of his sorrowing relatives.

And now, according to the system of all *conclusions*, I know very well, that it will be expected I should take a retrospection of all my several characters, and inform the reader, as these pages close, how they were, at the time of that closure, employed.

Henry and his Charlotte beheld their happiness increase with each succeeding day; no domestic jars disturb their felicity; each loving and beloved, each equally good humoured, lively, generous, and sincere. They know not sorrow, but as it reaches them through the sufferings of their fellow mortals, which they strive, as much as in their power, to alleviate, and which heartfelt delight is given their benevolent and feeling bosoms to know

know by their possession of an ample fortune.

Mrs. Clarkson, living with her son and daughter, and having much leisure time on her hands, is throwing her thoughts together into some kind of form, and of a dry and heterogeneous mixture, means to make of them an *Historical Romance*; and she expects that any bookseller will be very happy to purchase the copyright for an *hundred guineas!!!*

One vice has been often known correct another, and I am really such an old fashioned mortal, as to *consider* excessive dissipation a vice. Cards were always banished from Mr. Mordaunt's parties, whenever his daughter, the beautiful widow, Lady Warrington, appeared in them, fearful that the very sight of them might too strongly remind her of the fatal
exit

exit of her wretched husband. Thus, from the habit of never playing, cards not only became indifferent to her, but, in the end, she viewed them as objects of disgust; but her violent spirits, always as easily depressed by sorrow as highly elevated by fictitious joy, became low, and her nerves were in an alarming state of debility. Every amusement was eagerly procured her by her fond father, and a love of dissipation, the most confirmed and varied has succeeded to a love of gaming, which is now become her aversion.

The worthy Mr. Elford and his blind daughter are cherished friends of Mr. and Mrs. Denbigh. Henry has appointed Mr. March his *land* steward. But Elford will not be deprived the pleasure of still regulating the accounts of the sometimes

times too liberal Denbigh, and carefully collecting his rents. While he makes all his tenants happy, and repays his benefactor with his care and integrity.

Lady Dorimon is still the finest drest lady at all the city feasts; and her new liveries and new carriage for the Lady Mayoress's rout, (where there is always room, as she tells every one, for *her* and Sir Philip) are the general theme of conversation, both East and West of Temple Bar. She talks as much as ever; but as we daily get forward in the refinements of language, she renders a glossary requisite for the greater part of her hearers to understand her conversation.

Her son has lately paid much attention to the homely Miss Scrimp, whose father has promised another ten thousand to her present

present fortune, to be paid on the day of her marriage.

Old Caseknife, now near ninety years of age, may yet be seen attending at the Bank, either receiving his dividends, or placing more money in that emporium of wealth. He still sports the old spencer of his own making, and whoever has seen him once, will be sure to recognize him when again he meets him.

Many imagine that the world must be very bad indeed, when those who are formed to be its brightest ornaments, run away from it. But Major Farrington seemed to bid fair at becoming a very misanthrope. Yet why should he hate and shun mankind?—They had not injured him, it was he only who had injured himself, by preferring the empty boast and applause of family pride to the amiable

ble object who had so truly captivated his heart. He retired solely to the country, where his only recreation, there were solitary walks, or in snaring the finny tribe; while, as he patiently endured what I *consider* enough to weary the patience of Job himself, sitting whole days with his rod and line, without getting one bite, a tear from his fine eyes would sometimes drop in the stream in regret of his ever beloved Charlotte! The Major's was no common mind; neither was his love or its consequent sorrows of a common nature.

He generally confined himself to close study in his library all the morning, and he took care that his studies should be of that abstruse kind, as might serve to banish, as much as possible, the fond remembrance of one who was now the wife of
another

another. I do not think our crim. con. votaries would be at all inclined to follow such a praiseworthy example; but how much better would it be for them, and their future peace of mind, if, before they plunge in such dishonourable guilt, they would but pause, and "*consider of it.*"

Major Farringdon was continually employed in making observations on the variations of the needle; and persuaded himself that he had actually made a very easy discovery of finding out the longitude!!!

That dry part of History which seems to be a mere political gazette, formed another part of his studies, while he averted his attention from all those interesting anecdotes which chiefly render the records of former ages entertaining; but he declared

clared they only served to make of History a factitious mirror of error and deception.

So totally lost to that world of fashion he had long adorned, became the handsome and elegant Major Farrington! Who found, when too late, that the impression made on his heart and mind by the innocent and lovely Charlotte was more deep and indelible than he had ever imagined. One only pleasure he now allowed himself, and in that he indulged himself most liberally; it was in following the dictates of a most benevolent and feeling heart, to administer to the wants of the distrest and needy amongst mankind!

And now, my kind and patient readers, who have been good enough to peruse this motley work, from beginning to end,
and

and to such alone must I address myself, you will find that I have kept my word, when I told you, in the beginning, that I would give the history of some characters who were victims to this procrastinating thought or sentence of "*I'll consider of it*;" and in Major Farrington and Mr. Dorimon, you will behold two who might truly be called victims. For while Major Farrington took so long *considering* whether or no he should nobly overstep the fastidious rules imposed upon him by high birth and family connexions, and while the handsome young citizen, Dorimon, just on the point of calling Charlotte Clarkson his own for life, put off with the sentence of "*I'll consider of it*," the misery he never meant to relieve, comes an handsome gay East Indian, all heart, all generosity, and possessed of true nobleness of soul and sentiment, and
snatches

snatches off the the bright prize from these two *considering* rivals.

And are we not, all of us, in some degree, victims to either the want of *consideration*, or of *considering* too much? Had my good predecessor, the author of "*Thinks I to Myself*," have but *considered*, as much as he *thought*, or *seemed to think*, his work would have made its way by its own *merit*, which, I must say, I cannot think it is entitled to that alone, for its *late* success; and had its publisher but *considered of it*, he would not certainly have ventured on a *seventh* edition !!!

Authors are, in general, a people who *consider* most; yet they do not *consider* enough; if they did, how much time, labour, ink and paper would be spared, ere the once spotless page was covered
with

with the trash, which we see too often presented to the world !

Booksellers and publishers *consider* also, in general, a great deal ; they *consider* the enormous price of paper, printing, advertisements, &c. &c. and, indeed, I must do them the justice to say, that these *considerations* are certainly very weighty. But then they are rather apt to *consider* too much ; till the result of their prudent *considerations* is often to doom eternally to oblivion, a work of merit, which might have happened to be justly appreciated by the public, been of profit to themselves, and advantage to the fame of its author.

But of what description, my indulgent readers, is the work now before you ? To you it belongs to determine. I only know, that it is a compound of leisure

thoughts, whimsical ideas, and a few observations and anecdotes amongst the passing scenes of ordinary life; these I have thrown together for your amusement, and—my own profit.

Much has an author to dread, much to endure! The tastes of men are as variable as their faces; and, I am sorry to say, there are many who are more ready to censure than to praise. I have, however, never heeded the *soi disant* critic, and *his* praise or censure makes no more impression on me, than houses traced on the sand, as the whirlwind passes over it. I dread only the frown of the truly learned, and the contempt of the elegant writer, who is possessed of well-earned fame. If such an one is with me, in my literary attempts, I care not who may be against me: and I know the wise
are

are ever lenient, and where, in a work like this, so liable to error, they find here and there a fault, they will, I trust, "*consider it not too deeply!*"

FINIS.

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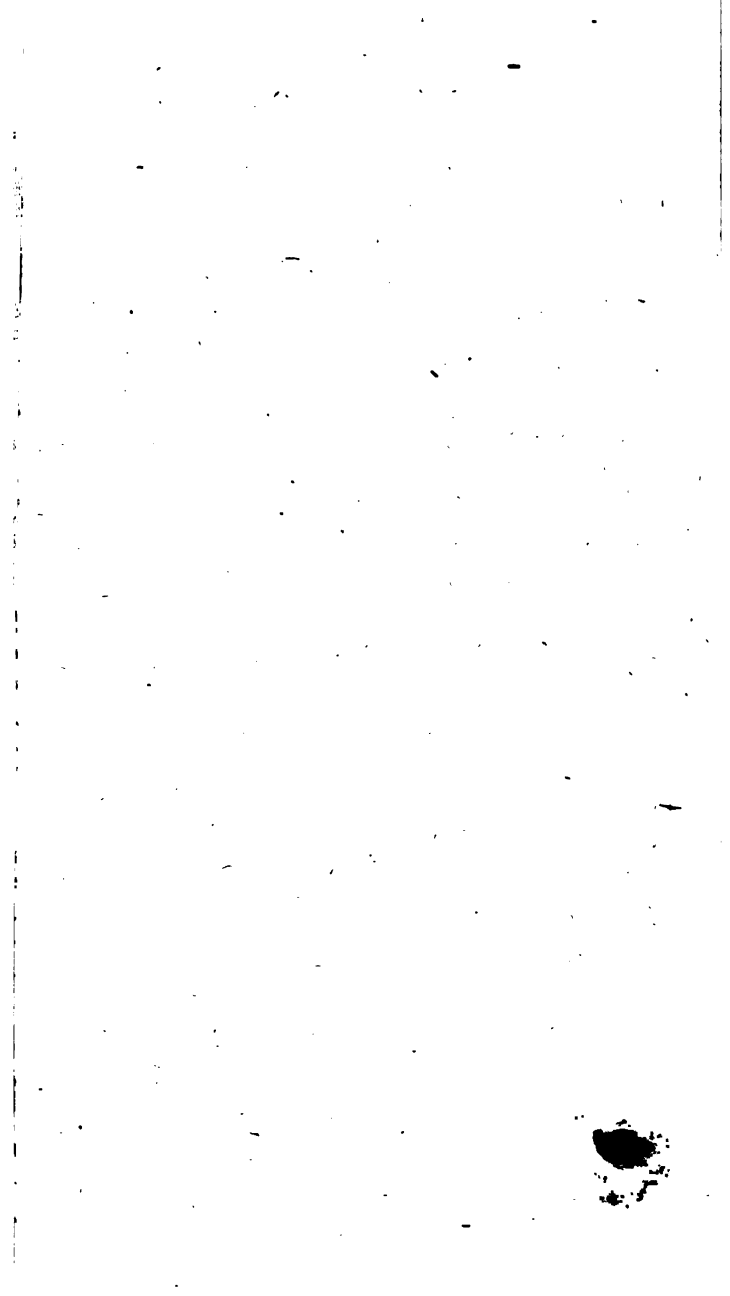
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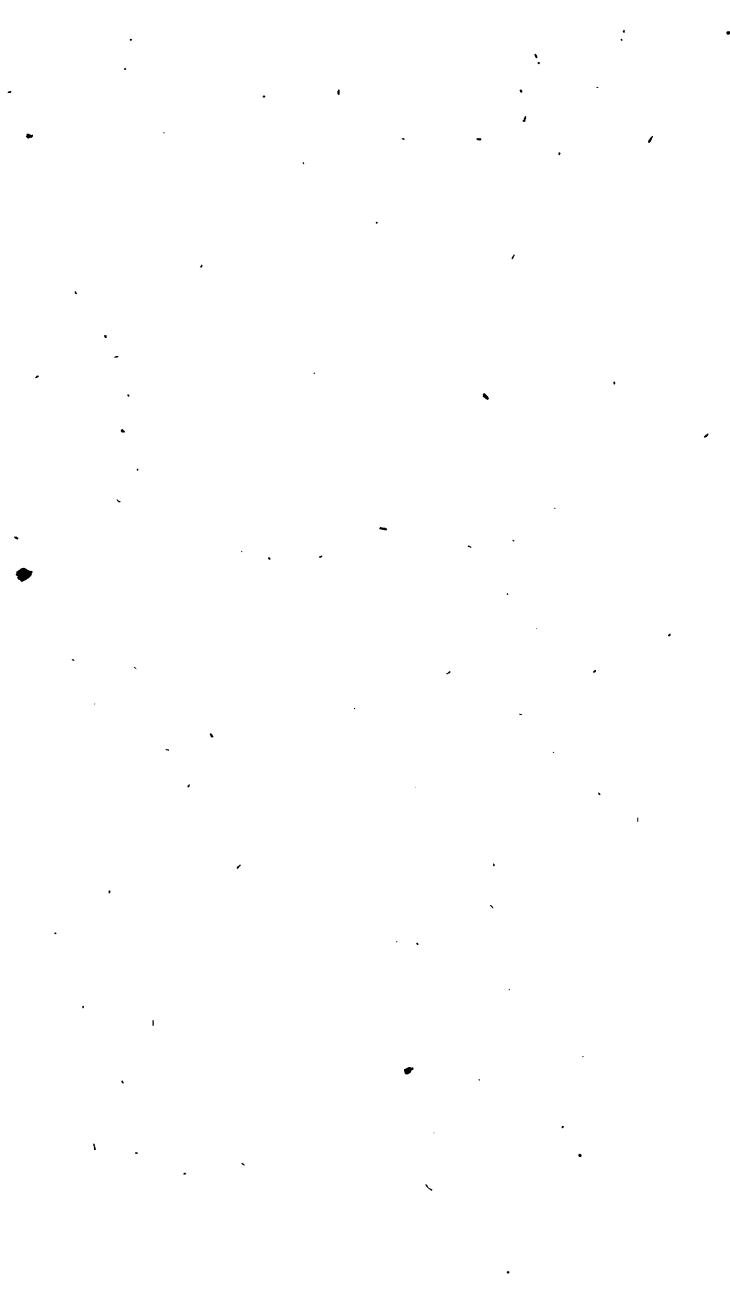
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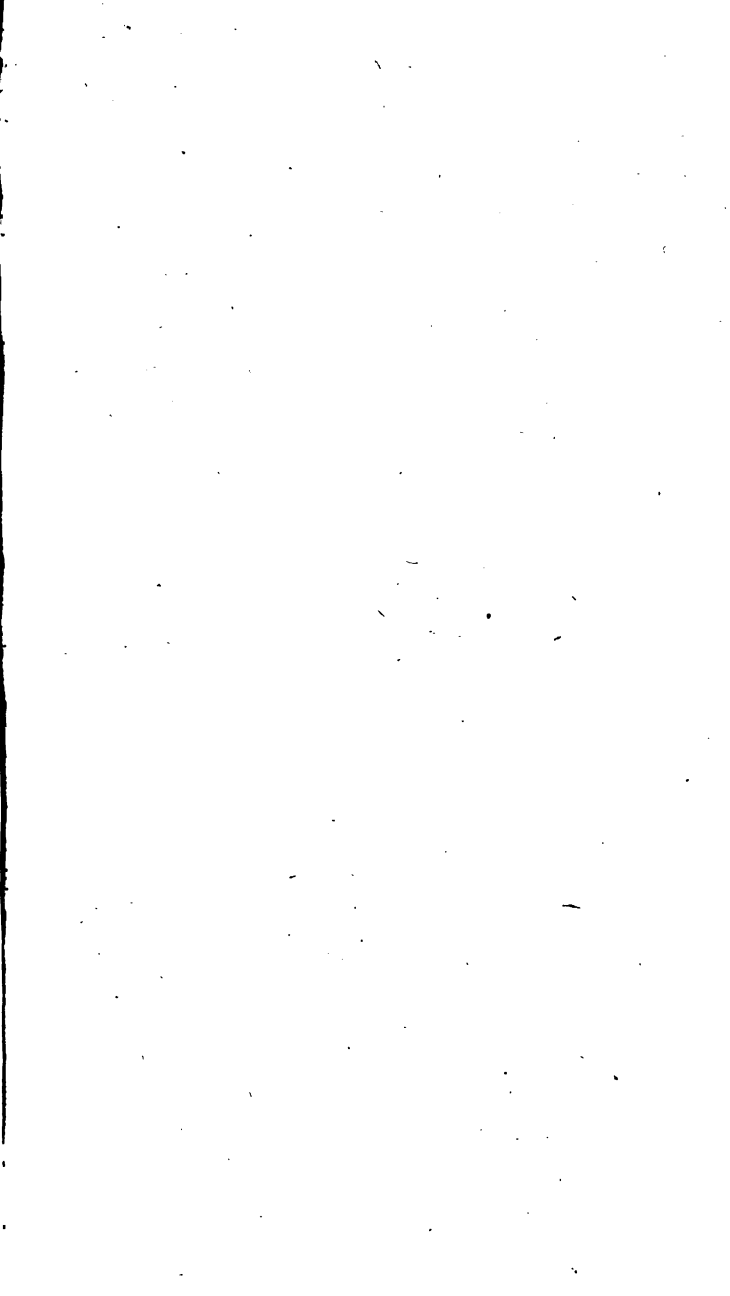
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